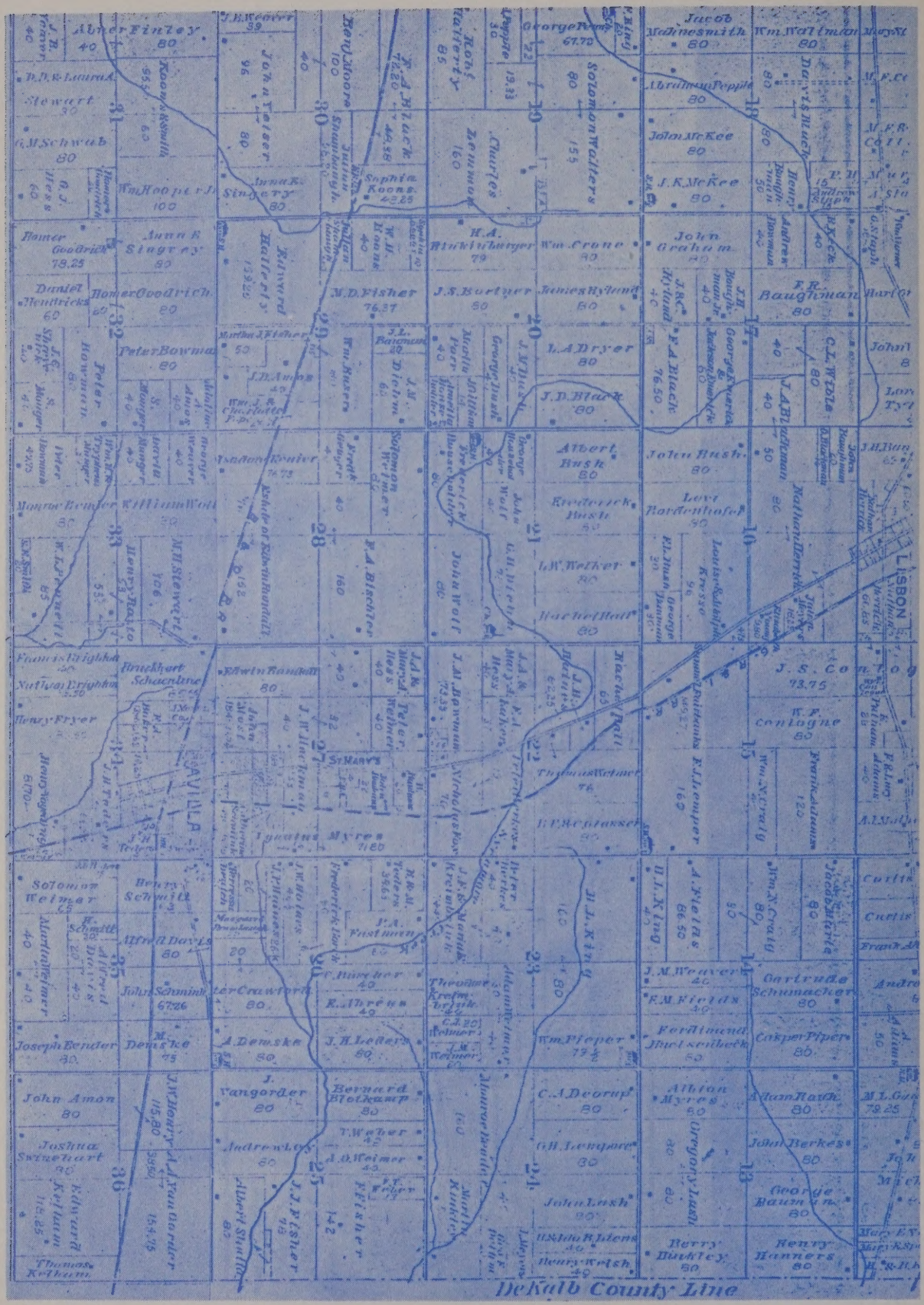
A PICTORIAL HISTORY of AVILLA INDIANA

by

MARYLAN L. KROCK

1983



Allen Township 1893

NOBLE
HISTORY
AVILLA
1983
08

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The Avilla History

compiled by: Marylan L. Krock

Photography work was done by Diane Kline of Kendallville.
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Post cards: courtesy of John Martin Smith, (Auburn), personal records, and many Avilla residents.
News items: Avilla News (past and present articles), History of Lagrange and Noble Counties, Alvord's History, Plat Map records (Atlases), Avilla residents, and far-a-way friends.
Other pictures: courtesy of photographer.

Foreword

It's been said that a man who has a dream will never be poor. The men who founded our town and many like them had to have had a dream and worked at making it come true.

Because of their speculation, dedication, and hard work, many of our surrounding towns are still thriving. In the following pages, the history of our small town; the biographies; and pictures of its ancestors will show that if it weren't for them, there would have been no history.

It is with this in mind then, that this book is dedicated to those people and to their descendants who have, in their own way, kept our town growing; to the people living in Avilla today (because they are part of tomorrow's history); and to my family and friends who have been a constant source of encouragement to me in helping me to realize my own dream.

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#112
Marylan L. Krock

Indiana
(Official State Poem)

God crowned her hills with beauty,
Gave her lakes and winding streams,
Then He edged them all with woodlands
As the settings for our dreams.

Lovely are her moonlit rivers,
Shadowed by the sycamores,
Where the fragrant winds of Summer
Play along the willowed shores.

I must roam those wooded hillsides.
I must heed the native call,
For a pagan voice within me
Seems to answer to it all.

I must walk where squirrels scamper
Down a rustic old rail fence,
Where a choir of birds is singing
In the woodland . . . green and dense.

I must learn more of my homeland
For it's paradise to me,
There's no haven quite as peaceful,
There's no place I'd rather be.

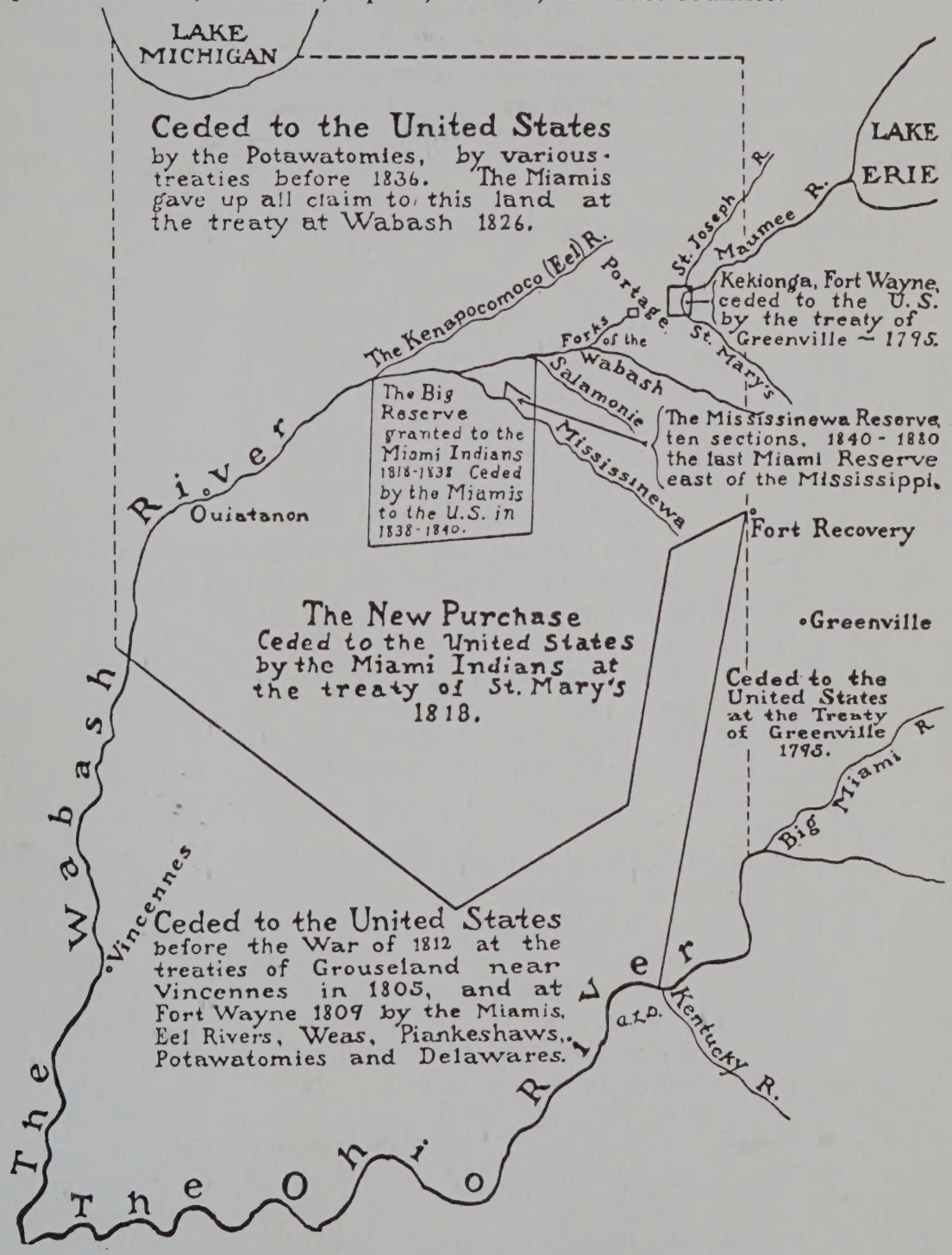
Indiana . . . is a garden
Where the seeds of peace have grown,
Where each tree, and vine, and flower
Has a beauty all its own.

Lovely are the fields and meadows,
That reach out to hills that rise
Where the dreamy Wabash River
Wanders on . . . through paradise.

Arthur Franklin Mapes,
Poet Laureate of Indiana

Land Grants

At the treaty of St. Mary's in 1818, the Miami Indians ceded to the United States all of their lands south of the Wabash river except the Big Reserve and a few smaller reserves. This cession called the New Purchase included fully one-third of the present state of Indiana. The Big Reserve, as it was called, included about nine hundred square miles of land lying just south of the Wabash River between the mouth of the Salamonie at Lagro and the mouth of Eel river at what is now Logansport. It included the southern parts of Wabash and Miami counties, all of Howard county, and parts of Grant, Madison, Tipton, Clinton, and Cass counties.


LAKE MICHIGAN
Ceded to the United States by the Potawatomies, by various treaties before 1836. The Miamis gave up all claim to this land at the treaty at Wabash 1826.
LAKE ERIE
St. Joseph R.
Maumee R.
Kekionga, Fort Wayne, ceded to the U.S. by the treaty of Greenville ~ 1795.
Portage
The Kenapocomoco (Eel) R.
Forks of the Wabash
St. Mary's
Salamonie
The Big Reserve granted to the Miami Indians 1818-1838 Ceded by the Miamis to the U.S. in 1838-1840.
The Mississinewa Reserve, ten sections, 1840 - 1880 the last Miami Reserve east of the Mississippi.
Mississinewa
Ouiatanon
Fort Recovery
Greenville
The New Purchase
Ceded to the United States by the Miami Indians at the treaty of St. Mary's 1818.
Ceded to the United States at the Treaty of Greenville 1795.
Big Miami R
The Wabash River
Vincennes
Ceded to the United States before the War of 1812 at the treaties of Grouseland near Vincennes in 1805, and at Fort Wayne 1809 by the Miamis, Eel Rivers, Weas, Piankeshaws, Potawatomies and Delawares.
Kentucky R.
The Ohio River

By the treaty of Paradise Springs made at Wabash in 1826 and at the Forks of the Wabash near Huntington, 1834, the Potawatomies ceded all of the northern part of Indiana to the United States. The Miamis had given up all claim to the lands north

of the Wabash in 1826. They were now left with the Big Reserve and numerous individual grants along the Wabash between Fort Wayne and Logansport. By treaties made at the Forks of the Wabash in 1838 and 1840, all of the Big Reserve was ceded to the United States except some personal grants to individual Indians and the tribal grant of ten sections on the Mississinewa river to the family of Chief Metocinyah.

Of the once vast empire claimed by the Miami Nation of Indiana, embracing perhaps sixty thousand square miles of territory, there now remained but tribal possession of ten square miles and number of individual grants to their leading chiefs and their friends.

In all of this transfer of lands, the United States Government at least aimed to compensate the Indians for the lands they were forced to give up. The Indians were paid down money in large amounts and were granted annuities for many years to come. Finally the remaining Indians were taken to lands in Kansas and later to what is now Oklahoma. These lands are now valuable, but at that time were of little value to the Indians. Exiled from the lands of their fathers with spirit and hopes crushed, most of the Miamis perished out west. Those who received individual possessions in Indiana soon lost everything in his dealing with the white man.

Exile of the Miamis to the West

Though the Miamis of the Wabash Valley had by treaty agreed to go, it was difficult to get them to leave their ancestral homes. The chiefs who agreed to these treaties were for the most part exempted from going west and had received for themselves and families much land in Indiana. The ones who were forced to go had had little part in making the treaties. They did not realize what it would mean. They had to be brought in by soldiers who herded them together at certain places where canal boats were ready to start them on their long journey. Some had to be hunted and captured like wild animals. It was a pitiful sight when they assembled. All that many of them could bring was a handful of earth from the grave of some ancestor. The Indian loved his native home and the graves of his fathers. It broke his heart and pride to think of leaving them. Then too, there was scarcely a full blooded Indiana among them, thanks to the morals of the early traders, U.S. Indian Agents and the pioneers. So they had to leave many of their relatives and close friends behind. Stoical as the Indian was, many of them broke into tears as the canal boats moved away. Hardhearted as many of the pioneers were, many of them were moved to tears at the sight.

Most of the Miamis of the Wabash Valley were taken by canal boats through Fort Wayne, Toledo, Cincinnati, Mississippi, and the Missouri to Kansas. They arrived there late in the fall. Used as they were to hardships, without adequate homes and food they could not withstand the Kansas winds and blizzards. But even so, homesickness was their great affliction. It is said that from one-third to one-half of them died during the first year. Many of them started back east, begging their way as they went. Some begged white people to take care of their children, and then wandered off in the storm to be seen no more.

The chief of the Miamis in Indiana, Francis LaFontain, accompanied them west in 1846, but because of his large family he returned in the spring of 1847. Christian Dagney, the Indian agent, did what he could to help his people. He was of French and Indian blood. His mother was a beautiful Wea woman. His wife was Mary Ann Isaacs of the Brothertown Indians. He died in 1848 at Coldwater, Kansas. Soon after this, his widow married another Indian of prominence, Baptiste Peoria. His father was a French Canadian and his mother was the daughter of a Peoria Chief.

He could talk English and French and many of the Indian dialects. His name is perpetuated, some claim in that of Paola, the county seat of Miami County, Kansas.

He remained with his people in Kansas until they moved to Miami, Indian Territory, in 1867.

The Miami reservation in Kansas contained about 500,000 acres. It was as good land as can be found in Kansas and would have made the Miamis a good home. But the land-grabbing white man soon discovered this good land, too, and demanded it. While this was solemnly pledged to the Indiana forever, "forever" here meant about the same time, some twenty years, as the "forever" of some treaties made in Indiana. By 1867 various treaties had been made that removed all Indians to what was then Indian Territory, now Oklahoma. The number of Miamis who went to Indian Territory was not large. In their dealings with the United States they were included with the Quapaw Indians and agency. But they gave their name, Miami, to the county seat of Ottawa county, in the northeastern corner of Oklahoma. According to information from their nominal chief, H.T. Palmer, there are about one hundred twenty of the Western Miamis today. Here, as in Indiana, they are now United States citizens without tribal relationship or government.

Noble County Indians

The tribes with which Noble County has to deal in history are those of the Miamis and Pottawatomies. As far back as the records extend - to the time when the French missionaries and explorers were extending their chain of missions and settlements along the great lakes and downward toward the Mississippi - these tribes occupied much or all of Northern Indiana. Here they were found by the French, and here they were found by early traders and captive white men. While perhaps these tribes were not so actively engaged in the border wars of Eastern Ohio as those living in that vicinity, many warriors, thirsting for war and ambitious of distinction, made incursions toward the East, and joined the hostile bands that were laying waste the frontier settlements. This state of affairs continued until the war of 1812, at which time the Indians here were badly defeated, and at the point of the bayonet were compelled to lay down the weapons of war, and sue for peace in the most abject manner. Their lands were ceded to the victorious whites, and they were confined to their reservations and to peace. A trading station had been early established at Fort Wayne, and this became a central point, where the Indians obtained their supplies and disposed of their furs, etc. In 1810, Tecumseh, one of the bravest, ablest and craftiest savages that ever lived, whose tribe had been given a tract of land by the Indians living on the Wabash, began visiting all the Western tribes with the secret purpose of inciting them to a concerted attack on all the frontier settlements. At the same time, when approached on the subject, he repeatedly avowed his friendship for the whites, and professed his desire for peace. But Gen. Harrison, the Governor of Indiana Territory, had no faith in the wily chieftain's profession, and continued his careful policy of handling the Indian question. Meantime, Tecumseh traveled among the various tribes, and by his craft and eloquence kindled them to the heat of war. At last, unknown to Tecumseh, and in direct oppostion to his intentions, his brother, the prophet, attacked Gen. Harrison on the 7th of November, 1810, and was badly defeated at the battle of Tippecanoe. This immature movement on the part of the Indians was bitterly lamented by Tecumseh, who became terribly exasperated at his brother for the rash act, and threatened to kill him for thus foiling his schemes, but the Indian power was hopelessly broken, and the Miamis and Pottawamies, who had taken an active part at Tippecanoe, buried the hatchet, and immured themselves within their assigned reservations. The old reservation, which included a portion of Sparta and Washington Township, was assigned the above tribes; but it was probably soon after the War of 1812 and prior to 1821. By the terms of agreement between the Indians and the Government, a large square brick-

house was erected at Indiana Village on the reservation to be used as the residence of the chief, Wawaassa or Flat Belly as he was more generally known. This building after being used several years as a combined council house and residence, was blown down by a great wind, and was not afterward rebuilt. The early settlers utilized the brick in their chimneys, etc. The tribes mentioned occupied the reservation until the year 1839, when they were transferred to the Wabash, and afterward no Indians visited the county save occasional stragglers. The lands of the reservation were not thrown into the market until the autumn of 1842, at which time many squatters were living thereon, some of them having made extensive improvements with the view of purchasing the land when it became marketable. Knowing that great hardships would be wrought the squatters unless something was done to protect them, the State Legislature made provision, that if their farms were entered by other parties, the improvements that had been made must be paid for by those who entered the land. This measure had in general the effect of deterring speculators and sharpers from their usual nefarious practices, though, in several instances where improvements made were insignificant, the squatter was obliged to leave his farm. The land of the reservation belonged to the State, and Logansport was the point where the entry had to be made.

Settlers from the eastern states learned of the land grants available in Noble County from the government for $1.25 per acre. Edwin Randall, with his purchase of 160 acres signed by Martin Van Buren, President of the U.S., along with Samuel Weimer, John Most, Caleb Day, James Power and others, made his bid for a part of what is now Noble County and Avilla's history.

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	*	Patent Deed.
United States	*	Dated July 20, 1837.
to	*	Recorded Feb. 6, 1893.
Edwin Randall, his heirs	*	Certificate No. 11905.
and assigns forever.	*	Consideration--"Full Payment".
	*	Sec. 34, T. 34, R. 11.
	*	Deed Record 67, Page 278.

"Give and Grant" according to the provisions of An Act of Congress of the 24th of April, 1820, entitled "An Act making further provisions for the sale, of the Public Lands" for the following real estate, to-wit: The north west quarter of section 34, in township 34 north of range 11 east. (And other description) in the District of Lands subject to sale at Fort Wayne, Indiana.

(Signed) By the President: Martin Van Buren.
By A. Van Buren, Secy.

(Seal) A.M. Garland, Recorder of the General Land Office.

Section 27	Section 27
John Most	Samuel Weimer 160 acres - April 30, 1836
Section 34	Section 34
Edwin Randall 160 acres - July 14, 1836	James Power & Caleb Day 160 acres

Land Measures and Homestead Law

United States Land Measure and Homestead Law

☞ A Township is 36 sections, each a mile square. A section is 640 acres. A quarter section, half a mile square, is 160 acres. An eighth section, half a mile long, north and south, and a quarter of a mile wide, is 80 acres. A sixteenth section, a quarter of a mile square, is 40 acres.

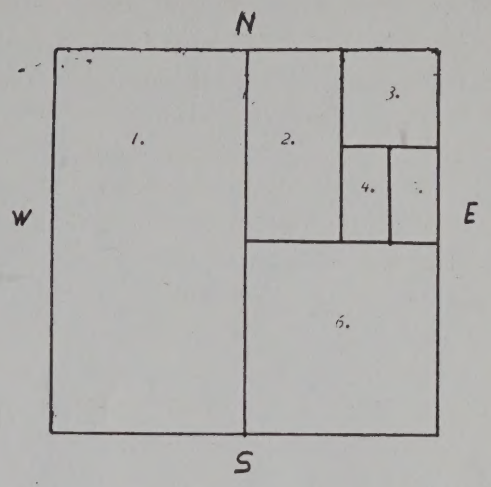
The Sections are all numbered 1 to 36, commencing at northeast corner, thus:

					NW NE / SW SE
6	5	4	3	2	
7	8	9	10	11	12
18	17	16	15	14	13
19	20	21	22	23	24
30	29	28	27	26	25
31	32	33	34	35	36

The Sections are all divided in quarters, which are named by the cardinal points, as in section 1. The quarters are divided in the same way. The description of a forty-acre lot would read: The south half of the west half of the south-west quarter of section 1 in township 24, north of range 7 west, or as the case might be; and sometimes will fall short, and sometimes overrun the number of acres it is supposed to contain.

HOMESTEAD PRIVILEGE.—The laws give to every citizen, and to those who have declared their intention to become citizens, the right to a homestead on SURVEYED lands, to the extent of one-quarter section, or 160 acres, or a half-quarter section, or 80 acres; the former in cases in the class of lower priced lands held by law at $1.25 per acre, the latter of high priced lands held at $2.50 per acre, when disposed of to cash buyers. The pre-emption privilege is restricted to heads of families, widows, or single persons over the age of twenty-one.

Every soldier and officer in the army, and every seaman, marine and officer of the navy, during the recent rebellion, may enter 160 acres from either class, and length of time served in the army or navy deducted from the time required to perfect title.



1. The W ½ of Section 320 acres
2. The W ½ of the N. E. ¼ of Section - 80 acres.
3. The N. E. ¼ of N. E. ¼ of Section -- 40 acres.
4. The W. ½ of the S. E. ¼ of the N. E. ¼ of Section
5. The E. ½ of the S. E. ¼ of the N. E. ¼ of Section -- 20A.
6. The S. E. ¼ of Section -- 20 A.
   The North Half of No. 5 would be;
   The N. ½ of the E. ½ of the S. E. ¼ of the N. E. ¼ of Sec.-10A.

Noble County

During the time before Indiana was admitted to the Union in 1816, all of Northeast Indiana was included in Knox County with Vincennes being the County Seat. In 1818, Randolph County was organized which included what is now Noble County with Winchester as the County Seat. In 1823 or 1824, Allen County was organized taking in "Noble County" with the County seat located in Fort Wayne. In 1832, LaGrange County was organized and again included the territory covering Noble County with the County Seat at Lima (Howe). For a while during this time, a small house on the property of Gideon Schlotterback (Justice of Peace, Trustee, Town Clerk and County Commissioner, Ligonier) was used for a court of Justice.

The County of Noble was organized in 1836 by act of Legislature, to include 432 square miles. In 1833 Jacob Wolf was elected the first Justice of Peace within the limits of the county. Noble county (named after Noah Noble) when organized in 1836, needed a county seat and from that came the struggle for the honor. Sparta also plotted in 1836, had the prestige for approximately 14 months until destroyed by fire. Augusta, plotted in 1837, had it in her possession until a fire destroyed the court house and nearly all of the records. Port Mitchell then had her try at the county seat until yet another fire destroyed her chance. The year 1847 saw the county seat moved to Albion, and while there were two more fires involving the court house, Albion still has the honor of being the County seat. (The fact that Albion is located in the center of Noble County was one of the main reasons.)

Noble County Courthouse — 1907

Noble County Courthouse

Origins

Indiana: Named after the Indians who once occupied the land.

Noble County: Named after Noah Noble, Governor of Indiana in 1831.

Allen Township: Named by request of Hiram Iddings who drew up and circulated a petition and presented it to a board of County Commissioners Joseph Bristol, Joseph Hostetler, and Abram Pancake. The township of 1836 was settled by a Mr. Rice, Ulmer and Alpheus Baker who built three small log cabins (Ref: Representatives Men of Indiana 1837).

Hoosier: Nicknamed so because of reference made by James Whitcomb Riley who believed his reasoning was the true one: There are many claimants for "who's hyer?" said to have been hallooed by a cabin settler to a wayfarer on horseback, or vice versa, during territorial times. The word meaning important caller or friendly traveler.

Avilla: Named by Edwin Randall: "Through courtesy of the Venerable S.K. Randall of Kendallville, the News has been informed that Mrs. Mary Wilcox on account of failing health has moved from Clayville, N.Y. to the home of her daughter Mrs. C.B. Yaw of Ilion, N.Y. Mrs. Wilcox will be remembered by the older residents of this place as Miss Mary Hill, daughter of Noah and Rebecca Hill. It was Mr. Hill who put Avilla on the map and in early days it was often called "Hill Town"; and sometimes on account of its notoriety "Hell Town". Mr. Randall states that the name Avilla was given to the town by his father, Judge Edwin Randall, and was taken from French history as French called all small villages "Villas". Mr. Randall dropped the last letter and substituted an 'A' and the name Avilla has remained such ever since. S.K. further states that he is pleased that Avilla is still on the map, and takes pride in knowing that for over 33 years he with others were successful in keeping it on the map as one of the most progressive and up-to-date little towns in the State. Mr. Randall is one of the News' most valued patrons and not only reads the News himself, but pays for the subscription of a number of his friends." (Clipping from old Avilla News. In scrapbook kept by Mrs. Levi Hooper of Avilla).

Albion Street: Named after county seat, was once named Port Mitchell for same reasoning. East side of Albion Street was once called Auburn Street.

Lima Plank Road: Named for the planks used in building it and for its final destination located in Lima (Howe), Indiana. Started by the Honorable Samuel Hannah of Ft. Wayne, John Mitchell of Kendallville, and many others.

Walters Street: Named after Michael Walters (wife: Elizabeth Fryer). Is now called Water Street.

Baum Street: Named after Henry Baum of Walters, Baum and Haines Co. who started several additions within the limits of Avilla. (Wife: Sarah Fryer of Penn.)

Baums, Walters, and Haines Addition: Named after the above mentioned and following: Samuel P. Haines (Wife: Mary Smith of Penn.)

Fryer Addition: Named after Henry Fryer.

Wheeler-Spencer Addition: Herman Wheeler and Edward B. Spencer.

Storey Addition: Named after Thomas Storey. The alley running parallel to North Main St. to the west was at one time named Storey Street.

St. Mary's Addition: Named because the property included was at one time the original plot of St. Mary's until tax purposes changed it.

Ley Street Addition (now called Royal Crest): Streets are so named because of the family's preference (Duehmig: Sammy Drive, Lillian, Jim Dandy).

Van Scoyoc Addition: Named after Peter VanScoyoc.

Adams Street: Named for John Adams who used to live on the corner of Adams St. and North Main St. (Hwy. 3), where Mr. Clarence Schlupp now lives. Adams' sons, Robert, Wallace, and Harry asked that it be called after him.

Haines Street: Named after Samuel S. Haines of the Baum, Walters, & Haines Co.
Teders Addition: Named after the man who at one time owned the land. (Edward J. Teders).
Others: There were many streets that had no public record such as Washington, Cherry, Chestnut, etc.

Noah Noble

Born in Berryville, Frederick (now Clarke) County, Virginia, on January 14, 1794, son of Dr. Thomas and Elizabeth Claire Sedgwick Noble; a Methodist. Brother of Benjamin Sedgwick, James, Maria Noble Lindsey, Elizabeth Noble Winston, Louise Noble John, Lazarus, Mary Ann Noble Bush, Amelia, Martha Noble Tyner, Thomas George, George Thomas, Lucinda Noble Houston, Lavina Noble Sedgwick and Arthur Vance. Married to Catherine Stull Van Swearington on November 8, 1819, father of Thomas Enoch and Catherine Mary Noble Cavidson. Dr. Thomas Noble moved in about 1800 to Kentucky where Noah Noble grew to manhood, and wherre he probably attended the commong schools. Noah Noble moved to Brookville, Indiana in 1816. In 1817, he was commissioned a Lietuenant Colonel in the 7th Regiment of the Indiana Militia, and a Colonel in 1820. He was engaged in a number of business enterprises in Brookville, including land speculation and the running of a fulling mill and wool carding machines. He was elected Sheriff of Franklin County in 1820 and reelected in 1822. In 1824, he was elected to the Indiana House of Representatives and in 1825 was appointed Receiver of Public Monies for the Indianapolis Land Office, a position he held until 1829. In 1830 he was appointed' a commissioner to locate the Michigan Road which was to run from the Ohio River across Indiana to the Michigan border. On August 1, 1831. Noble was elected Governor as a "Clay Man". He received 25,518 votes against 21,002 for Daniel G. Read campaigning on the Jackson ticket, and 6,984 for Milton Stapp, running as an Independent. During his first administration, a state bank was created. Noble attempted to improve the common school system although the bill passed by the legislature was far from what he had wanted. On August 4, 1834, Noble was reelected Governor as a Whig. Daniel Read, a Democrat, was again his opponent. Noble received 36,773 votes to Read's 27,257. During Noble's second administration a revised tax law was passed and an extensive internal improvements program calling for construction of roads and canals, was begun. Noble was a candidate for United States Senate in 1836, and in 1838, but was defeated both times. He served on the Internal Improvements Board, 1839040, and was appointed Fund Commissioner in February 1841, a post he held until it was abolished in 1842. He died in Indianapolis, February 8, 1844, and was buried in Greenlawn Cemetery. His remains were later moved to Crown Hill Cemetery, Indianapolis. There are papers of Noah Noble in the Indiana State Library. Ref: Volumne I (Alabama-Indiana) Edited by Robert Sobel and John Raimo.

Lima Plank

Some time about the year 1847, a company of wealthy men at Fort Wayne, and along the Lima road, associated themselves together, with a capital stock of about $70,000, for the purpose of transforming the old Fort Wayne and Lima road into a plank road. Pursuant to the law of the State, this road was leased* by the company for a term of years, and saw-mills were erected all along the line to furnish three-inch oak plank, which was to be laid down on suitable sills, at right angles to the direction of the road. The planks were sawed and laid down in 1847 and 1848, and toll-gates were established from six to ten miles apart, and superintendents of sections, living along the road, were employed to keep the road in repair. The plank road was fifty

miles long, and, in some places, deviated from the old Lima road. A few small dividends were struck, but the road failed to repay the stockholders for the outlay of construction, and the stock steadily depreciated in value. Many of the largest stockholders at Fort Wayne and along the road were wise enough to get rid of the stock to Eastern capitalists, upon whom much of the burden of failure fell when the enterprise collapsed. Toll was collected on portions of the road until about 1858, when the route was turned over to the County Commissioners.

Historical Sites in Noble County Listed for Marking

Kendallville, Apr. 18 — During the observance of the Noble county centennial in 1936, the organization appointed an historical markers committee whose duty it was to select one or more points of historical interest in each township of the county, where metal markers, properly inscribed, would be placed by the state historical bureau, with proper dedicatory ceremonies.

Somehow that original committee failed to function, but enough interest was aroused in the subject to warrant the township Home divisions of the county — an organization of farm women — to sponsor the project. These women listed 21 sites for historical markers, which were approved by the state historical officials June 22, 1937. That was so near the fiscal "deadline" June 30, that the state had no funds available for the work. However, the matter was kept in mind, as more than half the counties of the state already have these markers, and two weeks ago the Noble county markers committee was notified that funds are now available to complete the work.

These markers will be placed, free of charge, by the state and county highway commission, under the direction of George V. Schort of Indianapolis, supervisor of the historical markers project, and the friends of the movement in Noble county are making every effort to have these markers placed before the expiration of the time limit on the appropriation, June 30, 1938.

The marker sites selected are as follows:

Allen township — "Underground railroad station" used in aiding runaway slaves before the Civil war — located two miles east of Lisbon; Asa Brown Tavern at Lisbon.

Elkhart township — First building in Noble county constructed for school purposes.

Green township — Old canal from Fort Wayne to Elkhart river; Indian camp at Bowman lake.

Jefferson township — The Indian mounds at north shore of Sweet lake.

Noble township — Wolflake, oldest continuously occupied town in Noble county; home of first white settler in county, Joel Bristol, April 4, 1827.

Orange township — Chautauqua assembly at Island park; orchard planted by Johnny (Appleseed) Chapman — early 1830's; "Limberlost" — home of Gene Stratton Porter.

Perry township — First "factory town" in county — Rochester, 1837; birthplace of first white child born in county, Simon Hostetter, August 8, 1832.

Sparta township — First "Seat of Justice" at Sparta, 1836; Indian reservation and Chief Wa-wa-es-sa.

Swan township — First improved Indian trail (plank road), 1833-37; famed "Buck Horse Tavern", flourished 1833-40.

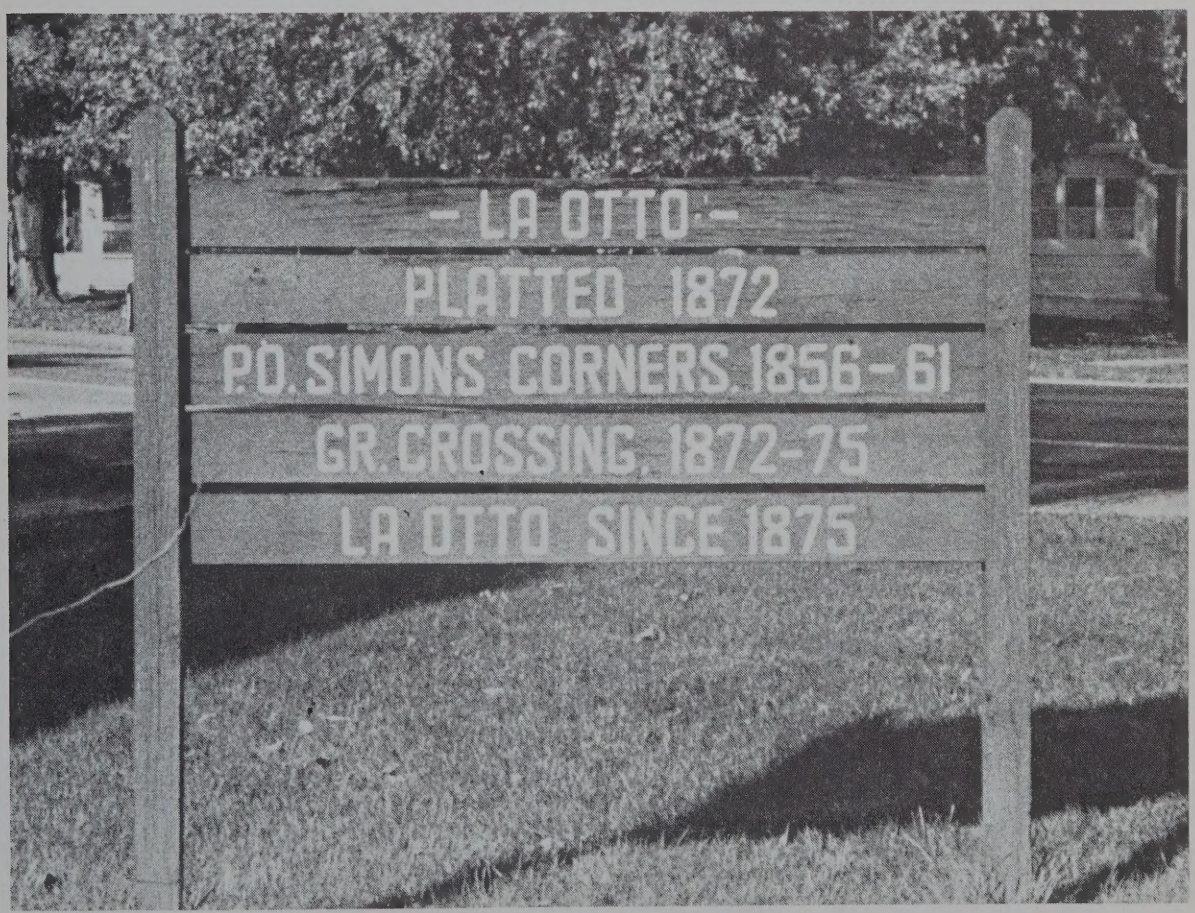
Washington township — Cross roads of two great Indian trails; first sawmill in county — best quality hardwood timber; mound builders leave monuments.

Wayne township — Indian trail, camp, village, along "Angling Road".

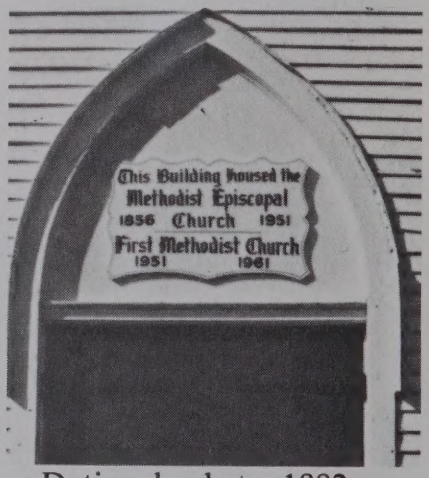
York township — First courthouse in county at Augusta, 1837, then Port Mitchell; civic and political history of county began here. *(Special to The Journal-Gazette)*

Historical Marker
Located at home shown below in Lisbon.

Located at Intersection of Hwy. 3 and 300 S. (Swan Cemetery).

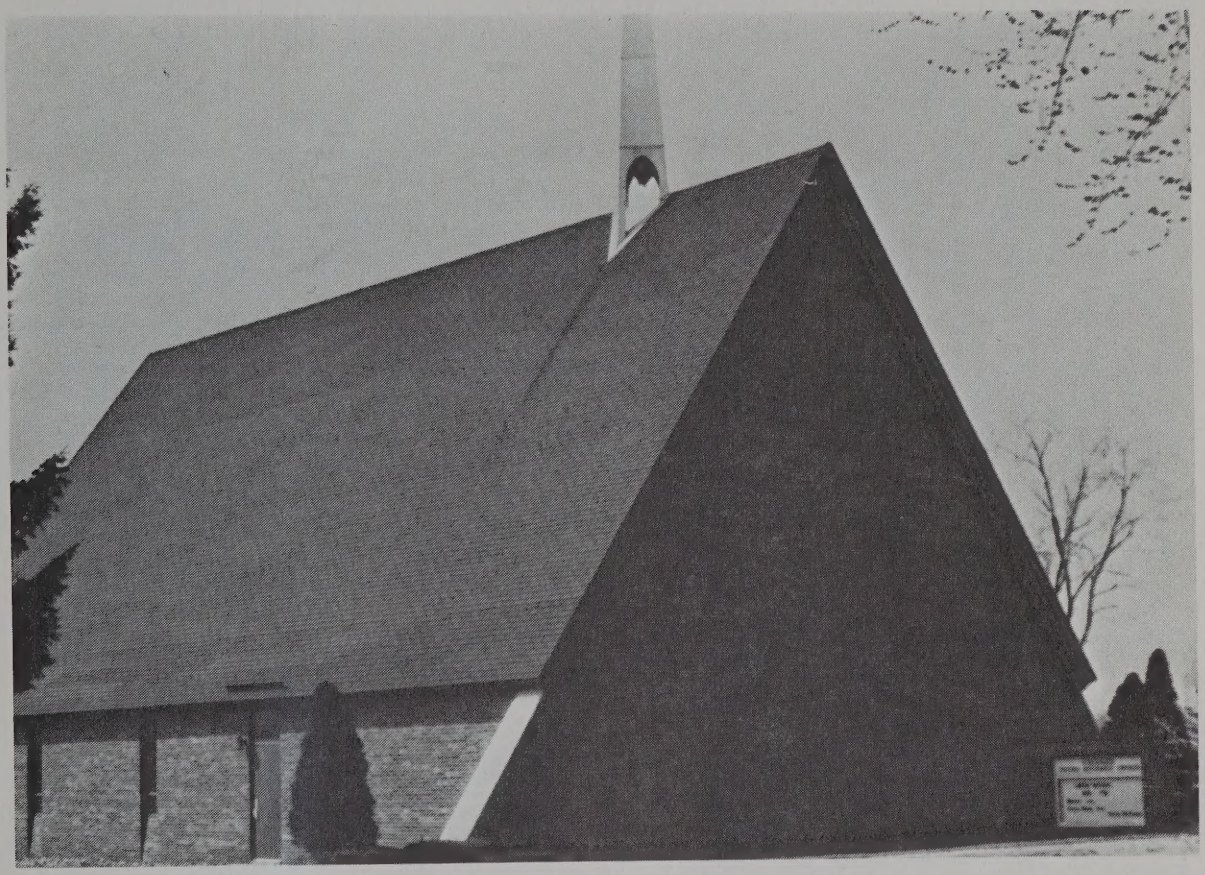


Located at Intersection of Hwy. 3 and County Rd. 205.

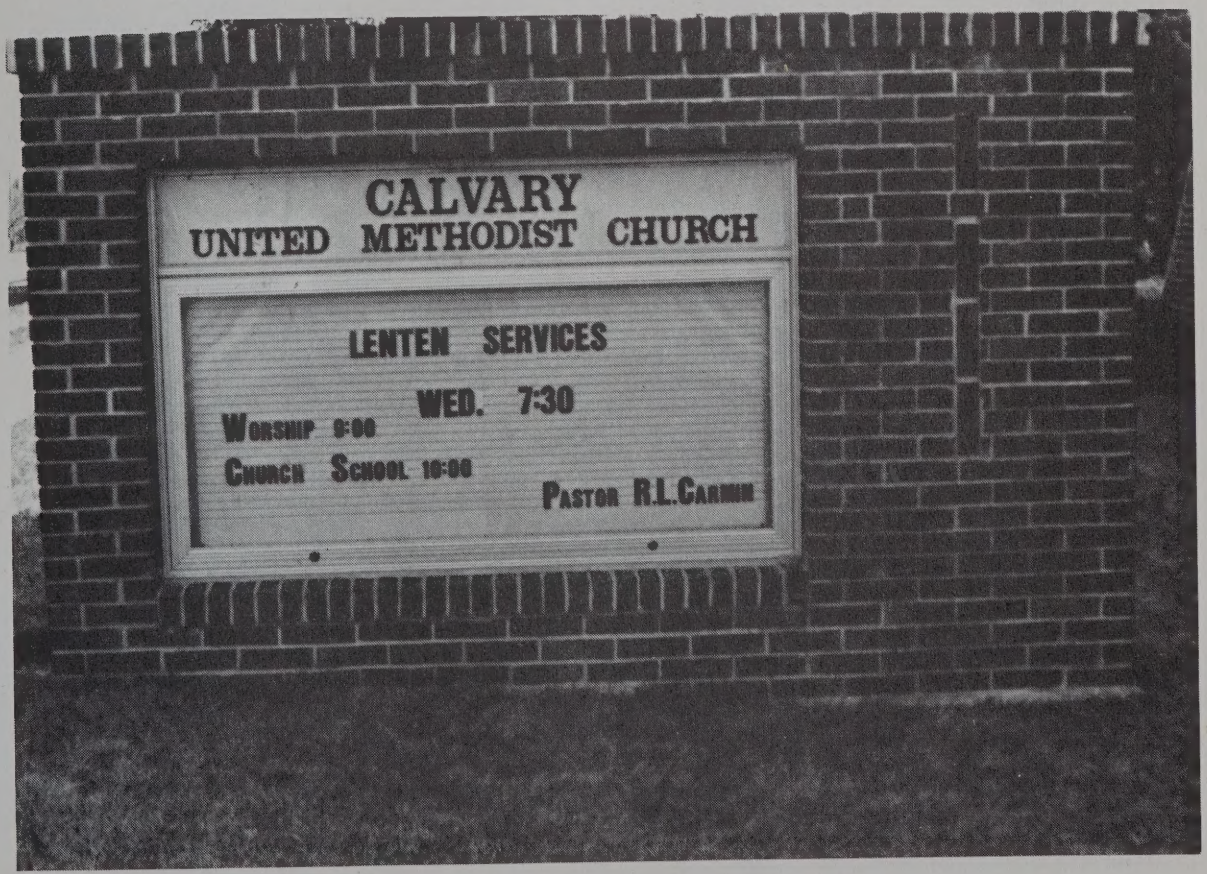


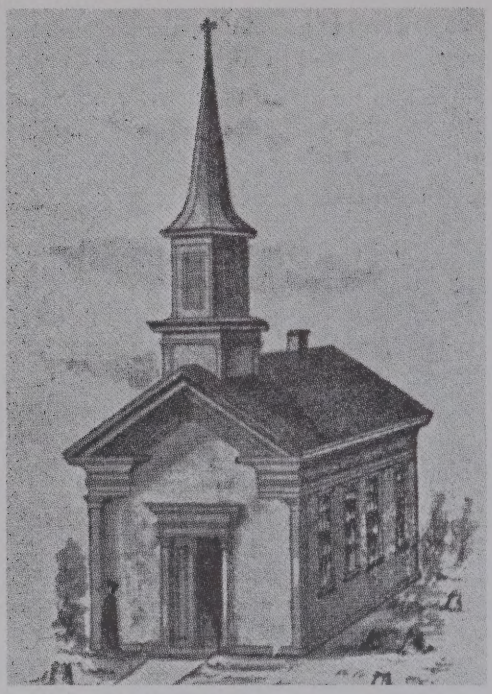
Dating back to 1882, the Avilla Methodist began uniting with other churches (Avilla, Summitt, Wolf Lake, and Charter Oak) in 1890. In 1895, Avilla joined with Swan. Many changes were made during the next years. The final change to date has been the one when the churches united in 1960's. Parsonage was built in early 1970's.

Calvary United Methodist Church

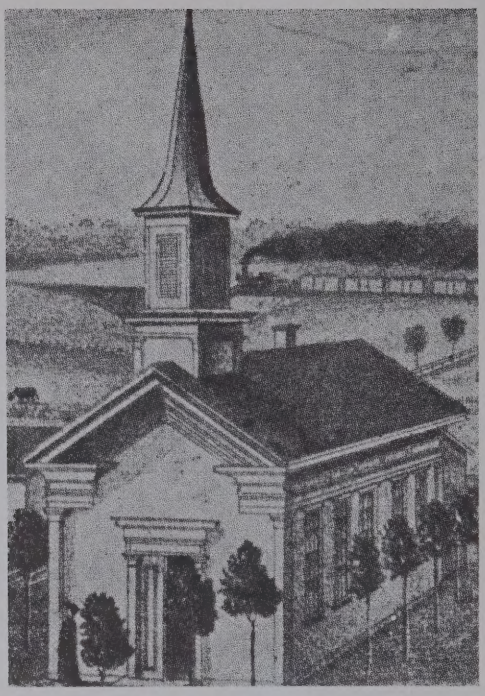


Present Church, Robert Carmin as Pastor





Original Little Church

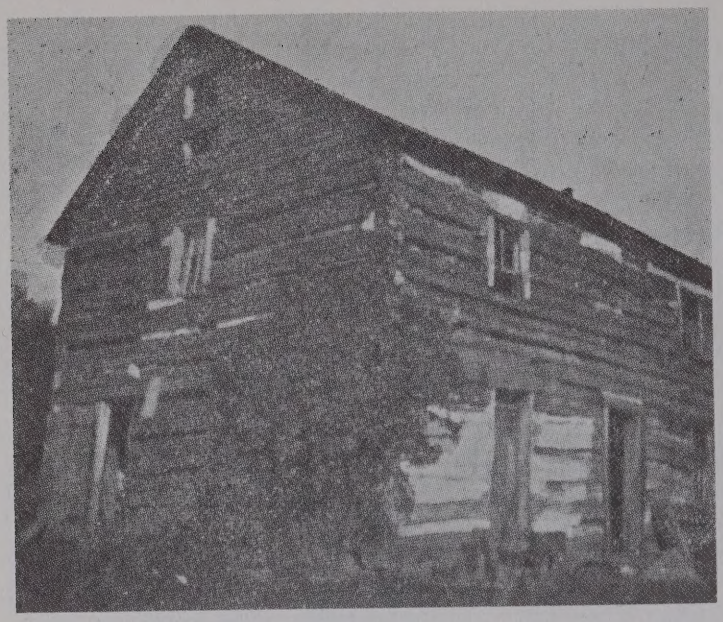


The Enlarged Church

In 1853, Father Faller, who had been made pastor of St. Mary's Church, Fort Wayne, organized eight families (Borck, Geiser, Thomas Storey, John Morehouse, Patrick Welsh, John Bauer, John Zonkher, Joseph Bender) into a congregation which was placed under the patronage of the Blessed Virgin under the title, The Church of The Assumption. He soon afterward began the erection of a church, which must of necessity be small and incomplete. The ground for this building was located away from the little town and railroads of the present day (in those times there was very little of the town and railroads had not been yet built). The exact spot was on the site of the present cemetery. This land was donated by John Geiser. It was dedicated by the Rt. Rev. Bishop de St. Palais in 1853.

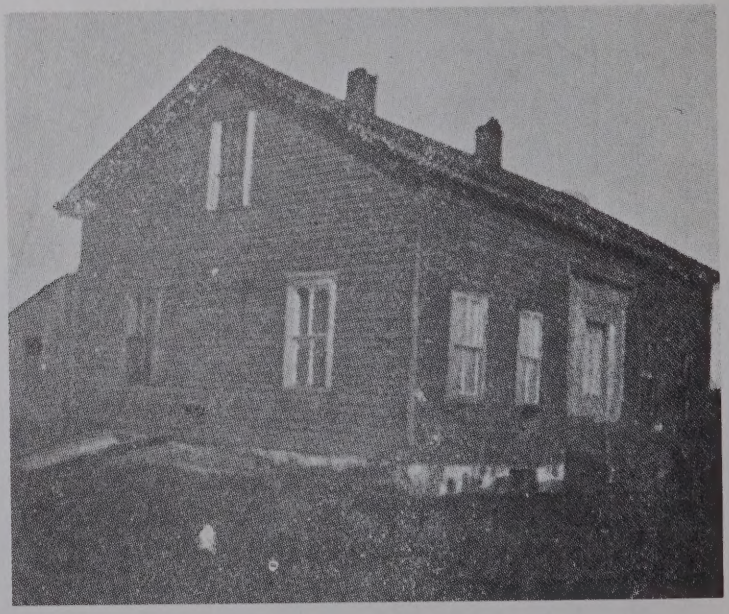
Father Duehmig began plans to build a new church in 1875, and in the early part of 1876 Thomas Storey offered to donate 6¼ acres upon which stood a little brick dwelling located ¼ mile south of the original church property. It was accepted and Father Duemig laid the cornerstone in the fall of 1876. It was dedicated May 19, 1878 with the Rt. Rev. Joseph Dwenger officiating. The big church bells rang for the first time on October 12, 1892.

Below: Father Bernard Galic with parishioners (1983).



In 1921, the old church was moved from the cemetery to a spot just north and back of the old school and used as a place for the children to play (later used as a wood shed).

Log house where first services were held at Avilla. Center picture is the new parsonage (built in 1889) located south of the church.



Old parsonage erected in the early 1860's. Father Shaefer resided here before he made his trip to Holy Land; upon his return he was sent to Columbia City where he built a Catholic Church there.

Many years ago, in return for a favor granted, the people of St. Mary's had promised to build a shrine dedicated to the Blessed Mother. In September of 1963, using rocks gathered from church property, men of the parish began work on a new grotto modeled after the one at Lourdes where the Blessed Virgin had appeared to Saint Bernadette. This was completed in 1964 (summer) and the statues were presented as a gift by the sisters at the Sacred Heart Home. Dedication was Sunday, August 23, 1964.

Sacred Heart Home
Full history is found in Golden Jubilee (Catholic)

Old People's Home, Avilla, Ind. Operated by the Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart, dedicated May 31, 1896. Bottom picture is new location of Sacred Heart Home, built in 1978. (Background shows buildings that remain at old location.)

Immanuel Lutheran Church

The Emmanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church at Avilla was organized about 1844 and the first building for worship, erected at a somewhat later date, was located on the site of the old Catholic Church, about a mile north of town. After a few years, a new church was built on the Peter Weimer homestead. Then another removal was made to a location on Michel Diehm's land where the present cemetery is located today, County Rd. 900 E. Sometime between 1893-1894 the old parsonage was moved from the cemetery to a place behind the present parsonage to serve as the school building. Sometime later in 1976, this old school was again moved and is now serving as our branch of the Noble County Library. The dedication ceremony was June 11, 1977.

REMEMBER WHEN?—This picture was taken in 1918 of the students that attended school at Immanuel Lutheran in Avilla. They are pictured on the east side of the old Parish Hall. The Parish Hall has previously been the church, but was moved into town after the building of the new church.

Pictured, back row from the left Ernest Busch, Walter Berkes, Forest Weimer, Lewis Householder, Norman Berkes, Albert Berkes and Rev. Purzner who was also the teacher. Second row from the left Maurice Diehm (deceased), Walter Weimer, Erma Strater, Anna Keller, Florence Noffze, Gertrude Sibert and Hilda Layman. Third row from the left John Lauer (deceased), Herman Bauman (deceased), John Gienger, Edwn Busch, Harold Gienner and Robert Berkes. *Photo contributed by Anna Keller.*

PRESENT CHURCH

Top: 1983

Right: The third church built by the Lutheran congregation was dedicated on October 22, 1893. The parsonage was at one time lived in by Michael Walters before his death. His widow sold it to a Mr. John Michell, Kendallville who in turn sold it to the Lutheran people. The church as it stands today, had remodeling and enlarging done in September of 1953 and dedication was February 28, 1954.

WITH DUE CEREMONY

1893 - June 22

Cornerstone of the New German Lutheran Church to Be Placed Sunday

And the Occasion Will Be a Memorable One — Everybody is Invited to Attend

Next Sunday, June 25, will be a great day for the German Lutheran people of this vicinity and their friends. The occasion is the laying of the cornerstone of the new Emmanuel German Lutheran church now being built on Albion street. The cornerstone, which is to rest beneath the northeast corner of the building, arrived yesterday. It is of sandstone, two feet four inches long, twenty inches wide and eighteen inches thick, the face bearing a suitable inscription. A deep cavity is cut in the stone, and in this will be placed a sealed copper box containing a copy of this issue of *The Avilla News,* one or two other newspapers, a history of this church society, which was organized in 1844-45, some memorial medals and a few other trinkets. The stone will be placed at 2:30 o'clock in the afternoon, the impressive ceremony of the church being conducted by Rev. Siebing of Fairfield Center. Rev. C.B. Pruess of this place, pastor of the church will deliver an address, and Rev. Broecker of Kendallville, will preach in English. Refreshments — ice cream, lemonade, etc., — will be served on the grounds, and everybody is cordially invited to be present.

NEW CHURCH — NEW PASTOR

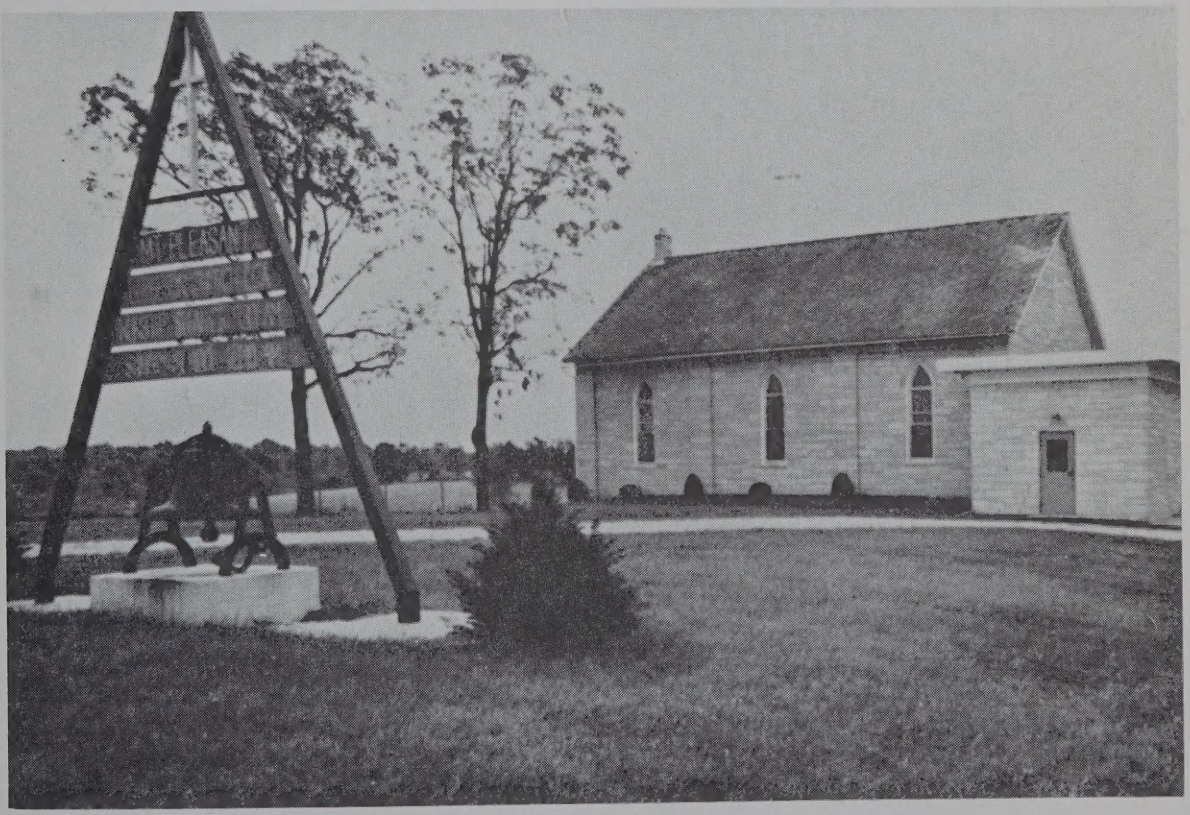
Some weeks ago *The News* noted that Rev. C.B. Preuss, pastor of the German Lutheran church here, was considering a call from Freedom, Ind. This he has accepted and will remove to that place immediately after the dedication of the new church here, which will occur on Sunday, October 22. Rev. Ferinand Koch of Fort Wayne, will be the new pastor at this place. He will be on hand to take a part in the dedicatory services and will move his family here immediately after. Workmen are putting the finishing touches on the church, preparing for the dedication October 22. The program of that occasion is extensive. The morning services are to be conducted by Rev. Siebing of Fairfield Center. In the afternoon Rev. Broecker of Kendallville, will preach, and Rev. Koch, the new pastor, will be installed. The evening service is to be in English, conducted by Rev. Keller of Auburn. All are invited.

Side View of the present Lutheran Church, Pastor Dean Bearman.

Left: Original church bell was installed in front of church March, 1976.

Mount Pleasant Church

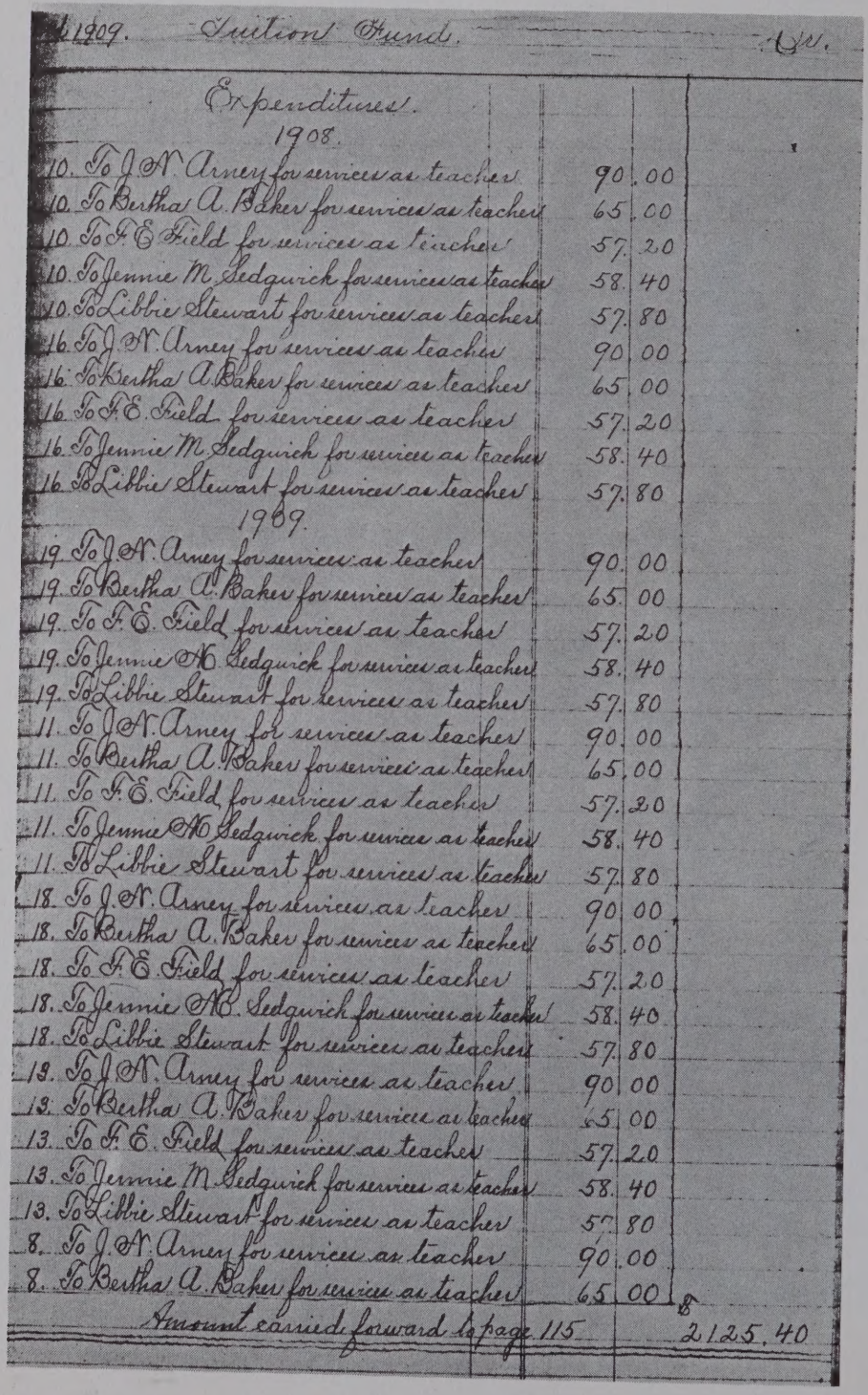
In 1848 the first church was built near Max Pfaffman's Home (State Rd. 8). Second church was built at present location in 1880.



Public Schools

The first State Constitution adopted in Indiana in 1816 provided for township schools, county seminaries and a state university, however, no specific plan for financing education was incorporated in the first constitution....In 1851, the present Indiana Constitution was adopted. In 1854, the State Teacher's Association was started, Public School Finance was not such a problem in the early 1900's. The schoolhouse was a simple one room building, the teacher taught first through eighth grades and school supplies consisted of some slates and paper, a few books, and wood for the stove. Allen Township - Section 4 had a first school taught by Julia Burnham in the summer of 1837 for $1.00 a week and boarded around. Later she taught at the farm of Hiram Iddings.

Below: Teacher's salaries in early 1900's.



1909. Tuition Fund. Dr.

Expenditures.

1908.

10. To J. N. Arney for services as teacher	90.	00
10. To Bertha A. Baker for services as teacher	65.	00
10. To F. E. Field for services as teacher	57.	20
10. To Jennie M. Sedgwick for services as teacher	58.	40
10. To Libbie Stewart for services as teacher	57.	80
16. To J. N. Arney for services as teacher	90.	00
16. To Bertha A. Baker for services as teacher	65.	00
16. To F. E. Field for services as teacher	57.	20
16. To Jennie M. Sedgwick for services as teacher	58.	40
16. To Libbie Stewart for services as teacher	57.	80

1909.

19. To J. N. Arney for services as teacher	90.	00
19. To Bertha A. Baker for services as teacher	65.	00
19. To F. E. Field for services as teacher	57.	20
19. To Jennie M. Sedgwick for services as teacher	58.	40
19. To Libbie Stewart for services as teacher	57.	80
11. To J. N. Arney for services as teacher	90.	00
11. To Bertha A. Baker for services as teacher	65.	00
11. To F. E. Field for services as teacher	57.	20
11. To Jennie M. Sedgwick for services as teacher	58.	40
11. To Libbie Stewart for services as teacher	57.	80
18. To J. N. Arney for services as teacher	90.	00
18. To Bertha A. Baker for services as teacher	65.	00
18. To F. E. Field for services as teacher	57.	20
18. To Jennie M. Sedgwick for services as teacher	58.	40
18. To Libbie Stewart for services as teacher	57.	80
13. To J. N. Arney for services as teacher	90.	00
13. To Bertha A. Baker for services as teacher	65.	00
13. To F. E. Field for services as teacher	57.	20
13. To Jennie M. Sedgwick for services as teacher	58.	40
13. To Libbie Stewart for services as teacher	57.	80
8. To J. N. Arney for services as teacher	90.	00
8. To Bertha A. Baker for services as teacher	65.	00
Amount carried forward to page 115		2125. 40

The Avilla School

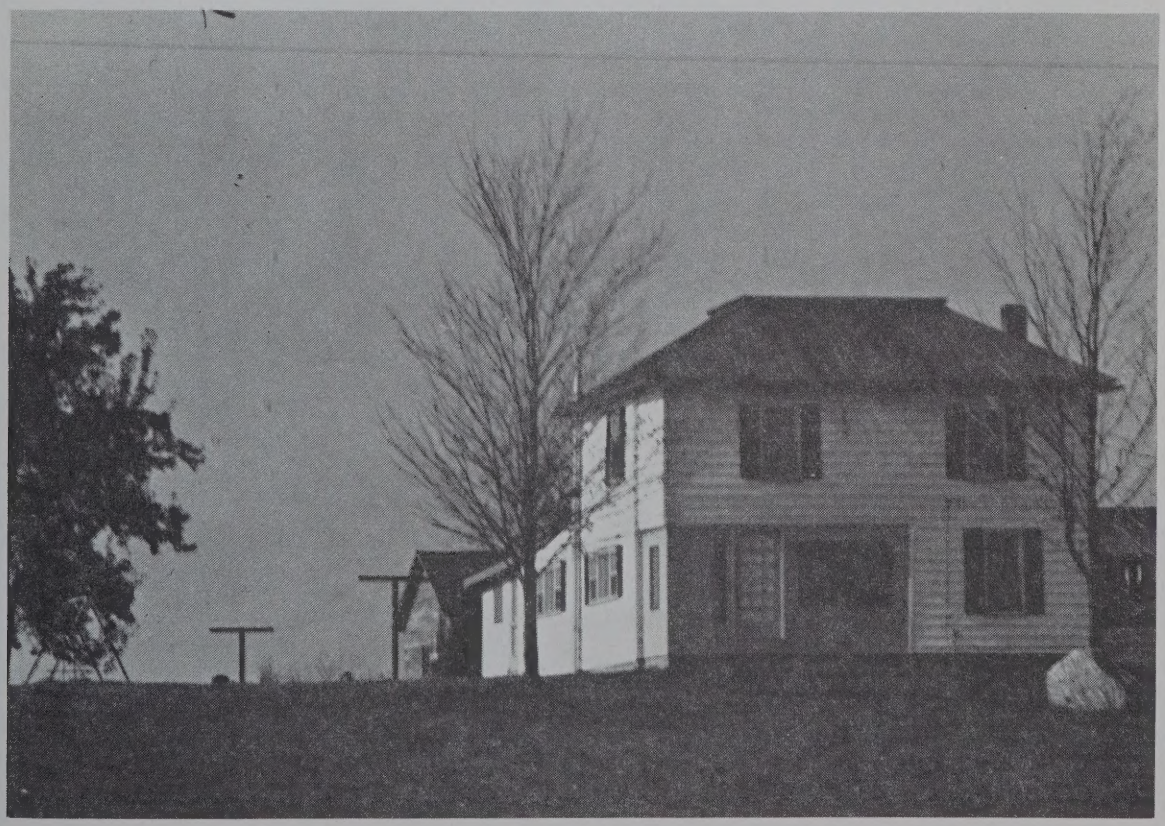
The Avilla High School came into existence in 1888. A two-year course of study was offered until 1892 when the curriculum was extended to include a three year course. In 1907, an addition was made to the school house to accomodate the fourth high school grade. In the same year, the furnace and water system were installed and the building was cared for by a janitor. In 1908, a class of 11 graduated, this being the first to finish a four-year course. Members of this class were: Clara DeCamp, Edith Hudson, Mable Kinney, Regina Grosswege, Bessie Stewart, Ella Clark, Jessie Popejoy, John Clark, Roy Good, and Roy Weimer. In the school year of 1908-09 the piano and physics cabinet were added. The school remained unchanged until 1911-12 when two book cases were built in the science room. The school year of 1913 is marked by the organization of the high school band and orchestra. And so on throughout the years. Members of the 1914 class graduating from the high school were: Glen B. Crowell, class president; Grace Yeiser (Sneary), class secretary; Claude Stephenson, class treasurer; Celia Sheets, editor in chief of the annual; Lucile Pilgrim, known as the class poet; Frank Lockhart, vice president; and Dorothea Stewart, class historian. W.L. Baughman was township trustee at that time. (Ref: Noble County Schools by Thurlow Holcomb.)

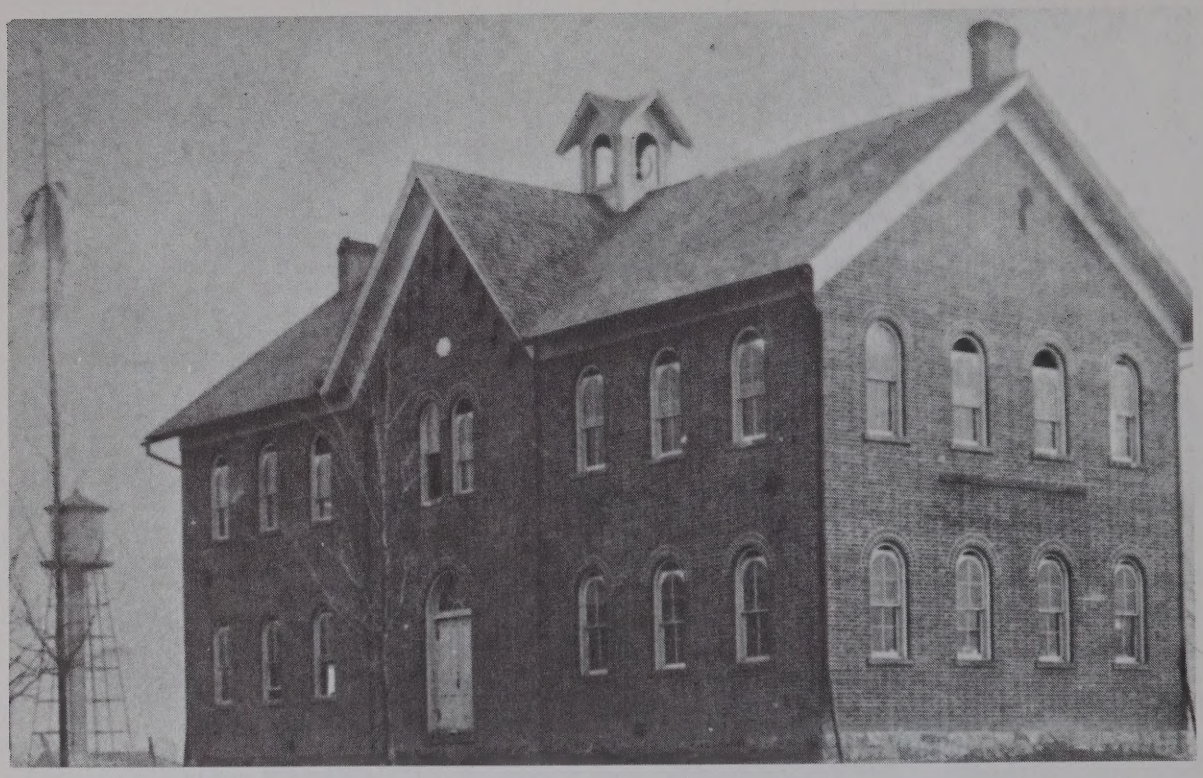
Allen Township School Locations.

A log school house was erected at an early day in Avilla, about where the livery barn (city hall now) now stands. But little is remembered of the early schools there. After a number of years, a better house was built near the Randalls' about half a mile west of town and soon afterward another was built half a mile east. Children living in the eastern part of town went to the house east and those in the west went to the Randall house. This state of things continued until the erection of the brick school house in Avilla. Below is Edwin Randall's house (now belongs to the Robert Jetmore family).

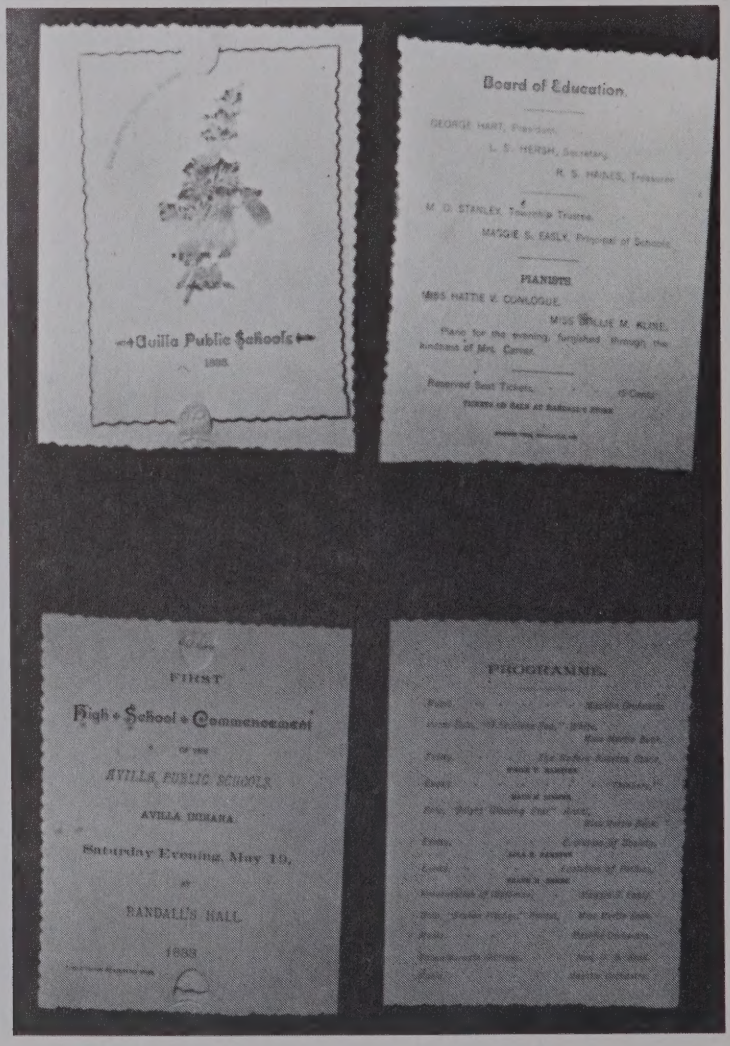
Top: This school built in 1871 employed two teachers and its enrollment was over 100. This was to later become the home of Peter Hass, (at one time the owner of a cigar factory located in Avilla) and is now the home of the Barry Bolinger family.

Bottom: Onetime home of Edwin Randall and then S.K. Randall (Schoolhouse) (Now R. Jetmore).

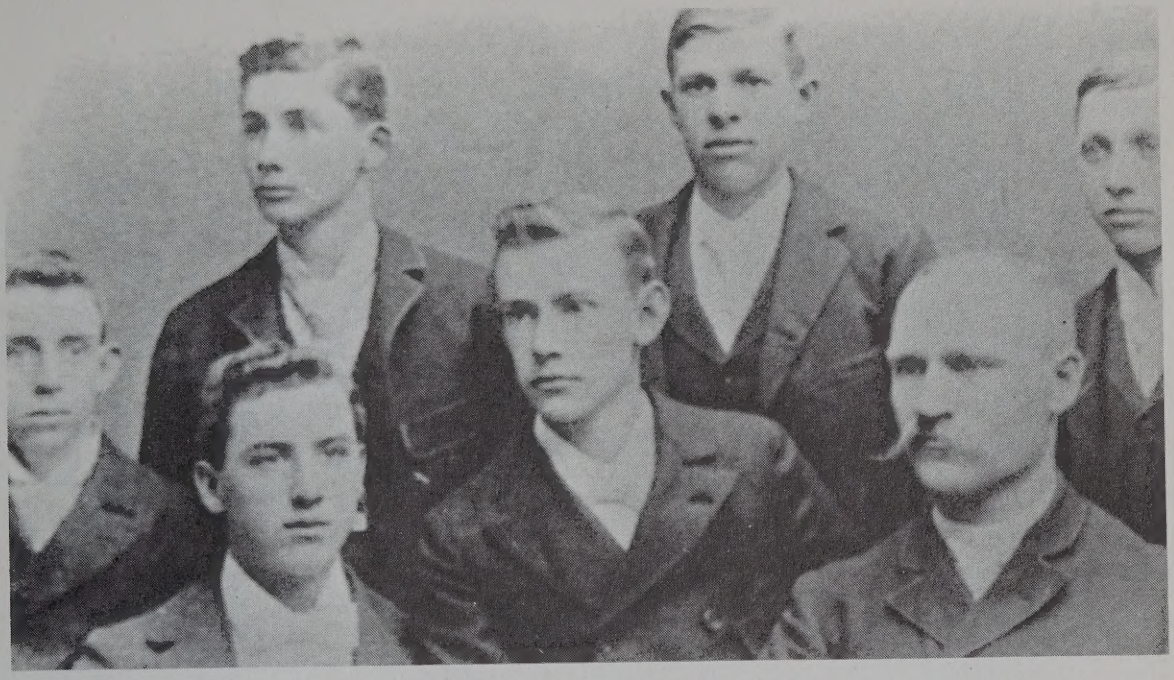




Another school (located between Walnut and Washington Streets - old ball diamond) built later in the 1880's, had its first graduating class in 1888. The students were: Maude Hooper (Sutton), Birdie Ramstem (Dolan), Lola Ramston (Hersh), and Frank W. Hersh.



The picture on the following page: Graduating class of 1893: Lloyd King, Arthur Haines, Clinton Hersh, Carl E. Baum, Weir Carver, Herbert Craig. Class of 1889: R.S. Maloney, Harriet Baker (Robinson), Dollie Kline, Lydia Teegarden (Martin), Elton King.



High School, Avilla, Ind.

Class of 1893, picture of school after new addition, and a picture of Avilla's 1923 girls' basketball team. Three girls over from the basketball is none other than our "Hardware Lady" Alberta (Boszor) Koons. The others are: Genevieve (Lobdell) Moore, Virginia Rider, Alberta, Helen Burns, Lucile Pfleightner, and Crystal Offord.

Avilla High School — 1906

Top Row, left to right — Lee Moyer, Bill Stellhorn, Roy Good, Oscar Vanderbousch, Roy Weimer, John S. Clark, Ella Clark Downing, Bessie Stewart, Gerry DeHoff, Wm. Hirsh, principal, Urban Schlotter.

Second Row, left to right — Charles Gates, Charles Wolf, George Lash, Theresa (Ueber) Knauer, Vera Knauer, Rene (Truelove) Hess, Ruth (Hayes) Cockley, Pearl (Hinkley) Potter, Regina Grosswege, Ella (Weimer) Cramer, Clara DeCamp, Edith (Hudson) Brooks, Mabel (Kinney) Gottschalk.

Third Row, left to right — Jay Hersh, Frank Stellhorn, Will Vanderbousch, Mabel (Kreiger) Crothers, Lillie (Yarian) Pfleidner, Madge (Stewart) Walker, Bessie (Yeiser) Golden, Lena (Allman) Dolan, Mary Sticker, Veda Allman.

Fourth Row, left to right — Harry Hass, Mike Stewart, Jennie (Lash) Halferty, Lula (Kokenge) McGill, Jessie (Popejoy) Smith, Nora (Truelove) Renkenberger, Zella Truelove.

Fifth Row, left to right — Everett Padgett, Merle Henney, Stacia (Hass) Kunsman, Minnie (Crothers) Pepple, Welcome (Kreiger) Clark, Vic Kinney, Mable VanGorder, Edna (Truelove) Yarian, Hazel Cramer, Orpha (Beckley) Anderson.

Sixth Row, left to right — Orpha VanKirk, teacher, Jennie (Stellhorn) Pilgrim, Zoe (Stewart) Stewart, Doyle Schambaugh, Geo. Woodruff, Cleo;n Pilgrim.

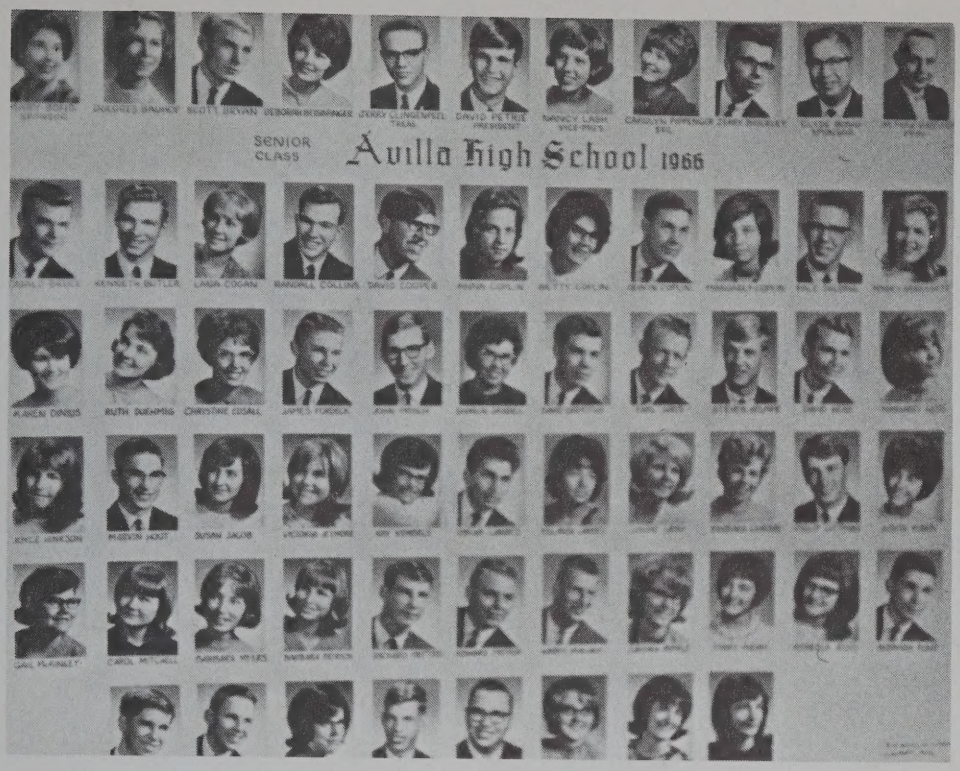
Bottom Row, left to right — Glenn Thrapp, Lottie Veazey, Lawrence Helmer, Clara (Monger) Harrold, Merle DeCamp, Bertha (Shanline) Hawk, Jennie (Halferty) Faux, Celia Sheets, Delpha (Whonsetler) Peters, Ruth (Yeiser) Thrapp, Rollie Hart, Lee Allman.

Senior Class of 1908 — Avilla High School

Ella Clark, John Clark, Clara DeCamp, Regina Grosswege, Roy Good, Edith Hudson, Mabel Kinney, Jessie Popejoy, Bessie Stewart, Roy Weimer.

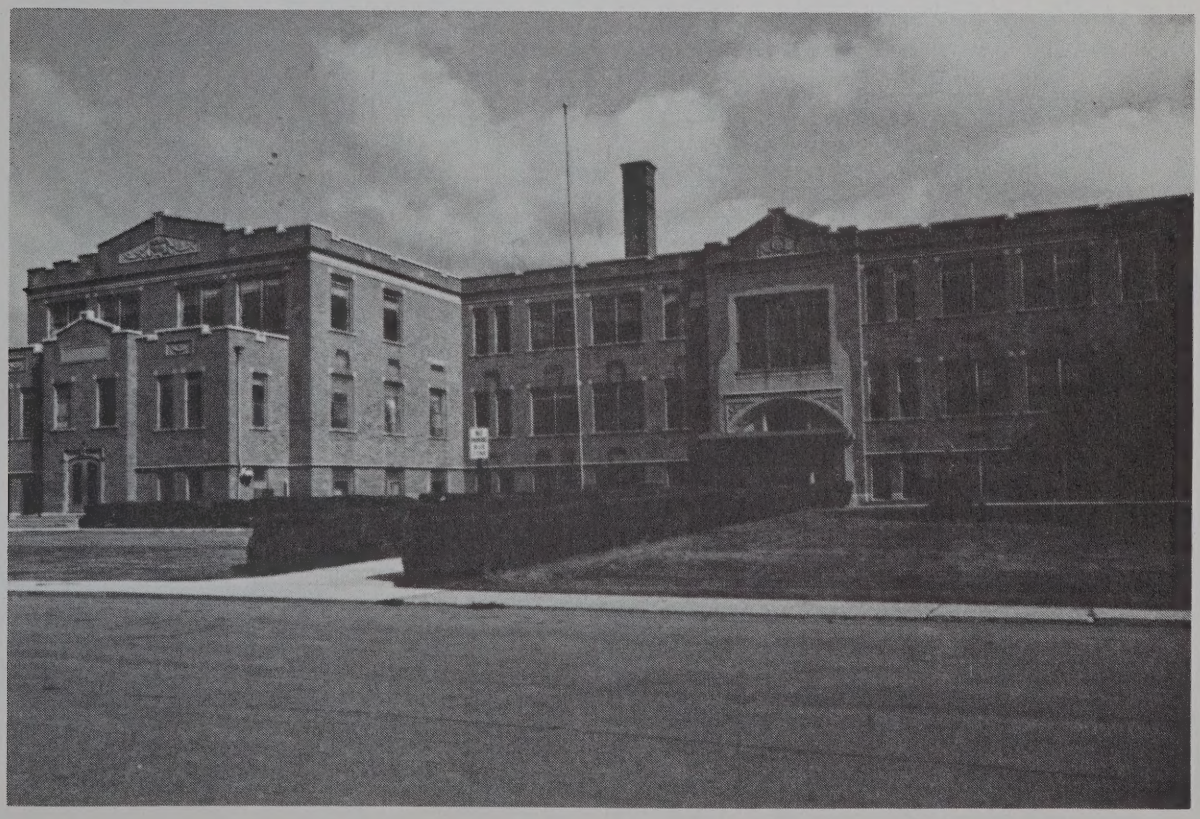
Avilla School - 1923 — Front row: Bob Henney, Bob Keck, Lawrence Kelham, Ira Nicodemus, Thad Berkes, Loren Smith (deceased), Meridith Ross. Second row: Georgia Keonig (deceased), Winifred Clark, Edna Berkes (deceased), Isabel Ihrie, unknown, Mildred Rex, Nellie Zimmerman, Helen Lower, Clar Diehm, Cleota Hile. Third row: Marjorie Van Fersen, Margariet Gregory, Lillian Offord, Mary Ross, unknown, Hile, Berniece Herron. Fourth row: Archie Zollman, John Gienger, unknown, Harold Gienger, Walter Kugler, Lawrence Uhl. (5th and 6th Grade)

This photo of third and fourth grade students was taken in 1923. Donald Uhl, who brought the photo in, doesn't remember all the students shown. Front and from the left are: Walter Kugler, Marion Richards, Kenneth MeKee, _____, Donald Uhl, Richard Hile, Allen Fordeck, Evan Gienger and _____. Second row are: Lucille Keck, the next four are not known, Elmo McKee, Martha Keck and two that are not known. Don didn't remember any of those in the third row. In the fourth row are: Velma (Wolf) Hunter, Tom Cramer, _____ Roberts, Cliff Hile, Lester Uhl, _____ Alberts, _____ Miller, Bessie Schuster and teacher Laura Hall. (4th Grade, 1923)



A new school was built in 1928 and was attended by many known local residents. New additions were added to the facilities in step with the population growth. Finally, the schools in the area were consolidated (East Noble School Corp.) and in 1966 Avilla saw the final graduating class go through its doors.

Below is the present Avilla School. Elementary grades of Kindergarten through fifth and the Junior High (6th, 7th, and 8th) still attend the school.



Ege's St. Mary's School

St. Mary's School - The little frame building that served as the first Catholic school in Ege owes its origin to Mr. Girardot, a pious pioneer settler, who, in 1863, built it to serve as a church for the few Catholics then living in the vicinity. Ege at that time was a mission which was visited at times by Father Shaefer. In 1833, Father Ege (the first resident priest) opened a school and for this end he gave one room of his own residence to be used for the schoolhouse.

Other known schools were the Pieper School, the Turkey Penn School.

Ege's St. Mary's School

Turkey Penn School.

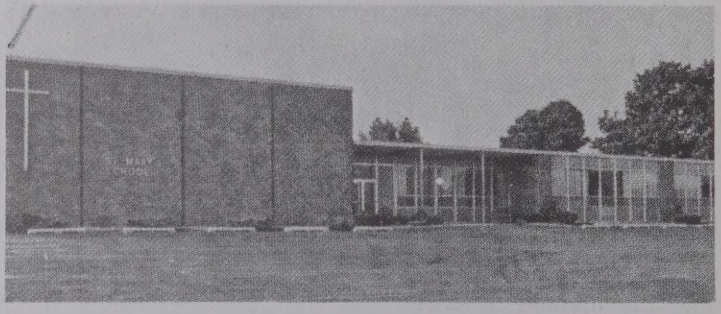
Saint Mary's School

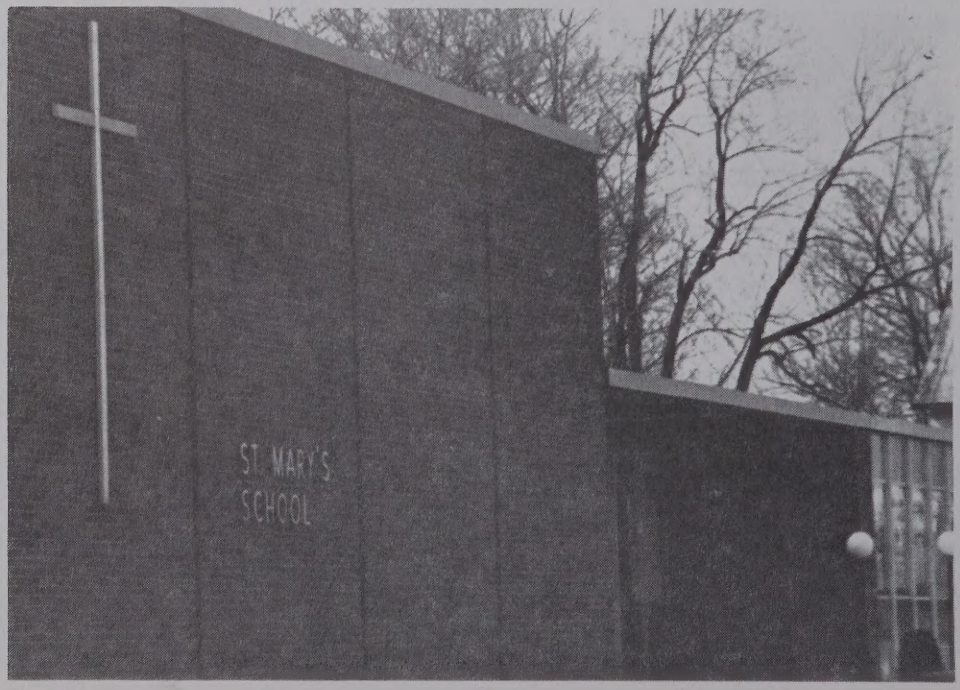
Father Schaefer, first resident priest of St. Mary's, established a school in 1855 for the Catholics. In 1878, a parish school building was erected. The school was taught by secular teachers. It is now taught by the Sisters of St. Francis, and is known as the "St. Augustine's School". The first schoolhouses were sometimes used as churches until the erection of the first churches.

Below is a class of young second grade students in the year 1894.

Shown above is the Convent located behind the old school (soon to be torn down to be replaced by a new home for the Sisters on the South side of the parsonage.)

Below is the new Catholic School in Avilla, with enrollment of 80 students grades kindergarten through sixth.





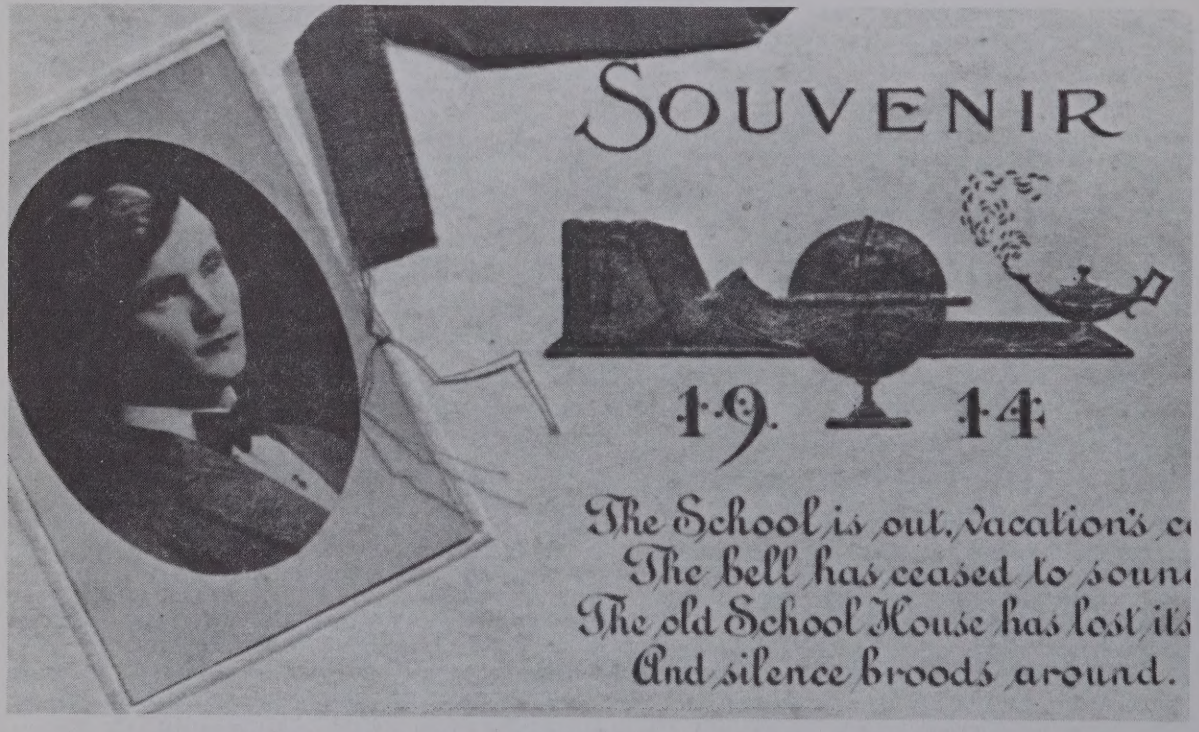
Above is a picture of the old Germany school once located on the Fred Householder's Homestead, section 21 - was taught by Joel VanGorder who walked to school from home east of Avilla (school closed early 1915).

Below is a picture of a 1913 class at the Singrey School. Those known are Clarence Uhl (3rd from left in front row) and Harold Uhl (4th from left in front row).

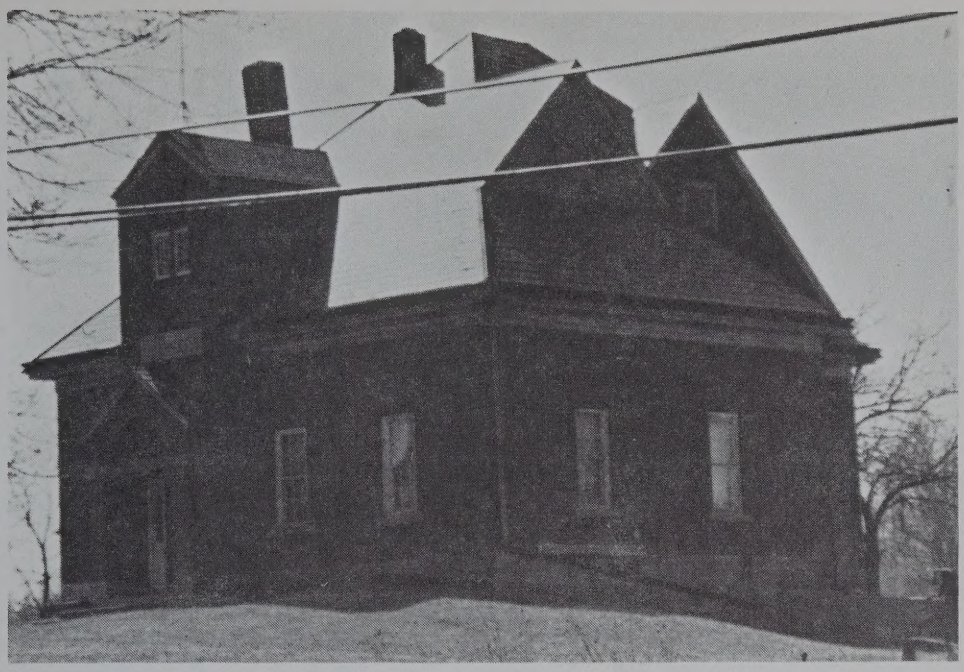
Laotto School

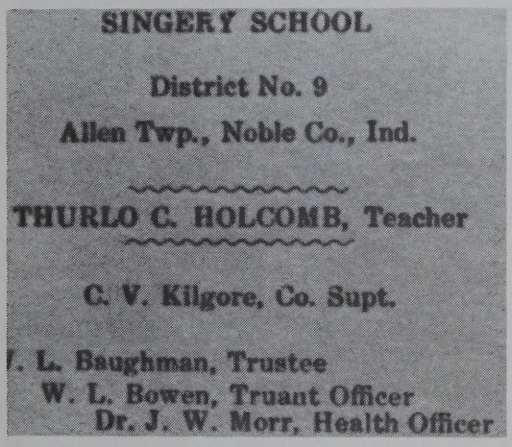
The first school in the village was located in a building standing on the corner where Harlan's Hardware is today. In 1876, a one story brick school house was built in the south end of town (where the old filling station used to be). In 1901, a third school was built. In 1918, an addition was added including a gymnasium. In 1937, the High School was removed with students having a choice of going to Huntertown or Avilla. In 1965, the present school was build and now has grades through five enrolled.

To the left: Above the door reads — Swan Township -1901, District No. 7, J.M. Miller, Trustee, Advisory Board: G.S. Bricker, J. Grams, F. Rosenberger, Architect: M.J. Stock, and H.L. and Barker: The Builders. *In part taken from a History of LaOtto by Richard Porter.*


SOUVENIR
1914
The School is out, vacation's
The bell has ceased to soun
The old School House has lost it
And silence broods around.

The Singrey School has been torn down. No photo available.




SINGERY SCHOOL
District No. 9
Allen Twp., Noble Co., Ind.
THURLO C. HOLCOMB, Teacher
C. V. Kilgore, Co. Supt.
. L. Baughman, Trustee
W. L. Bowen, Truant Officer
Dr. J. W. Morr, Health Officer

Top: Lisbon School (presently home of Everett Becker).

Left: Singrey School Announcement.

Bottom: Lisbon School - Allen Township High School District No. 24 - 1906 - Thomas Kelham Trustee (this was sent 1910).

Main Street: Looking north - the Catholic Church can be seen at the left of the picture. Also seen, the big house on the right (Hilda Haines' home and at one time Pepple's Barber Shop in the front - John Schoeffer (Grist Mill) Home).

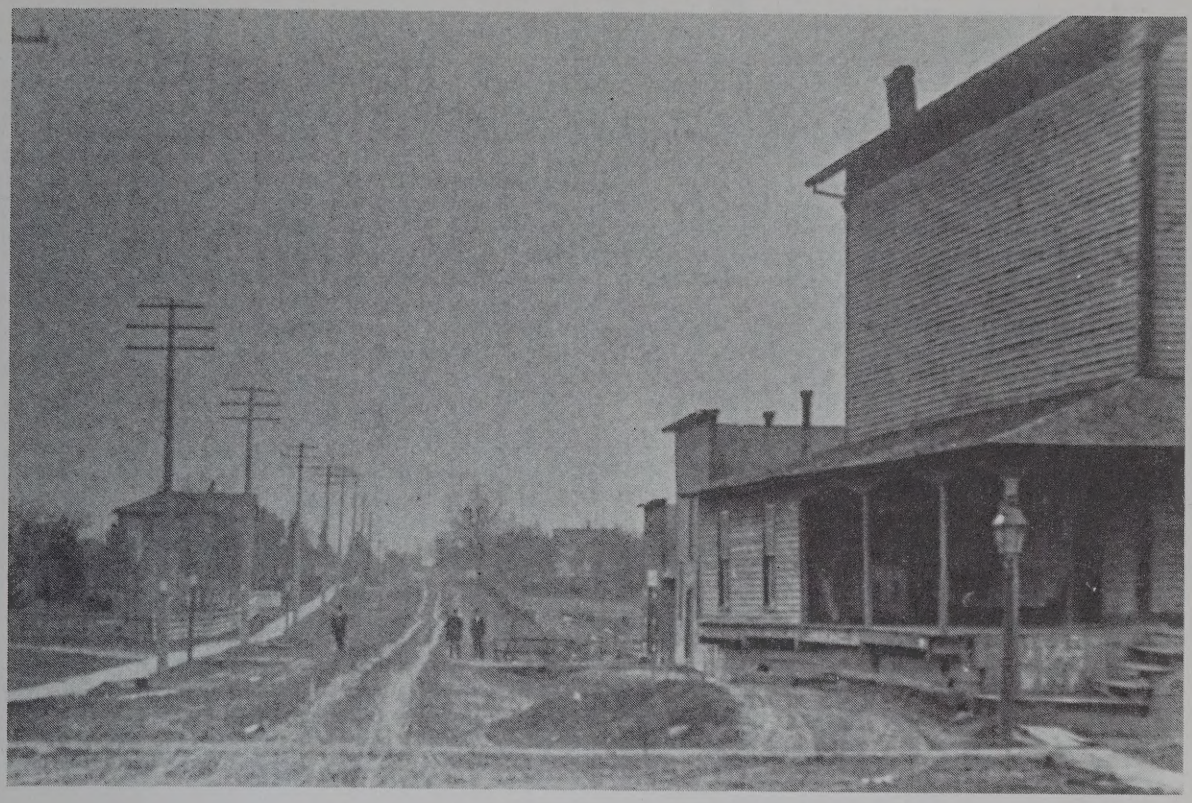
Bottom: More of the same scene - The back of the Dolan House and (Kiddie Korner) store building (brick), used to be R.S. Haines store, then Fischer and Wolf grocery.

Main Street looking south: House on left is 212 S. Main and on toward intersection of Hwy. 3 and Road 8. Big building on the right is Schoeffer's Grist Mill (now Federal Savings and Loan).

Mobile gas station: (Used to be Schoeffer's grist mill, gas station, Standard Station, [now is First Federal Savings & Loan].)

Top: Intersection Albion Street and Road 3 (Lima Plank Road) looking north. Brick house on corner built by Sol Baum (Bob Shuherks residence now).

Bottom: Corner of Albion Street and Road 3, looking west and north. Buildings are: First Federal Savings & Loan, Farmers Mutual Insurance Co. of Noble County and Riley's Inc. (Guns).



Top: West Albion street-Schoeffer's grist mill (once called corn crackers). House on left: R.S. Haines residence (now residence of the Dick Hippenhammer family). Grist mills were crude affairs and the flour turned out was coarse and black but the grist mills were well patronized as it saved long journeys through bottomless roads to distant points. (Before Lima Plank Road). Flour was bolted by hand unless they were fortunate to have running water to turn the bolt.

Bottom: The present scene looking west.

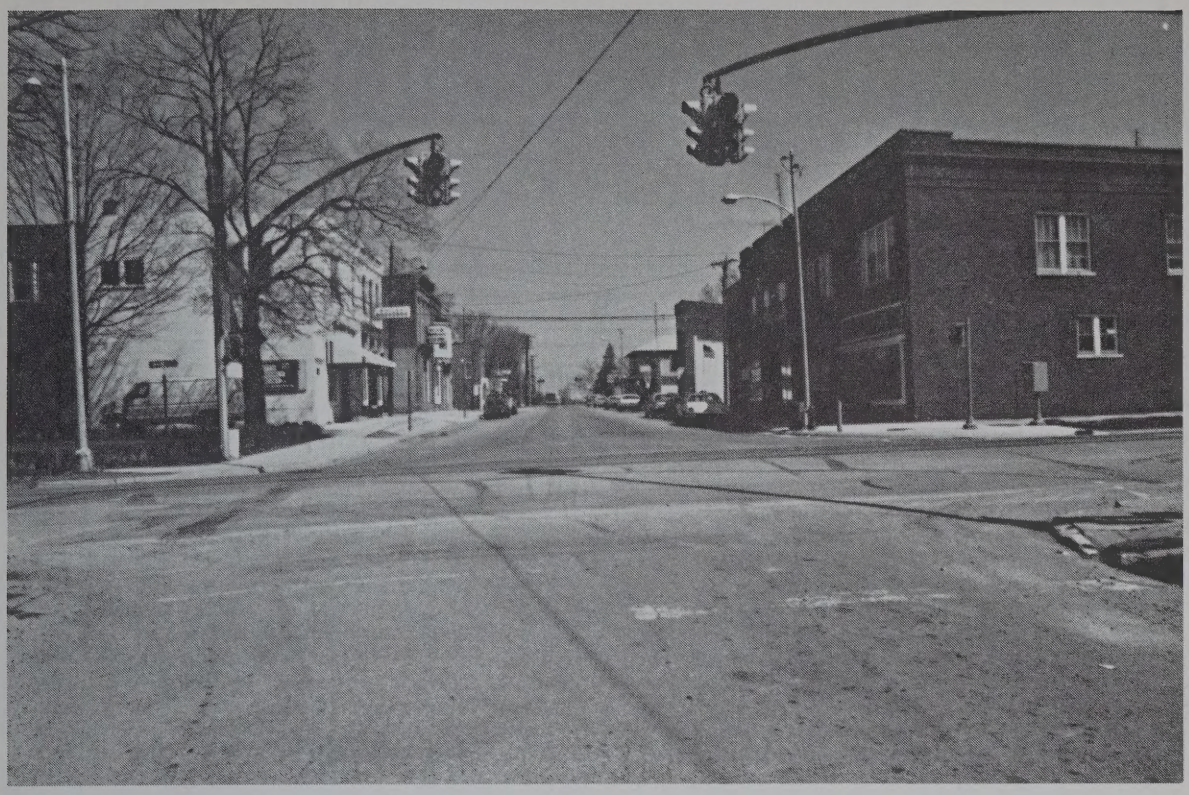
Top: Knauer's Hardware and Grocery Store (now is Delucenay's Antique and Realty), (At one time was Stewart's, and Delucenay's Drugs).

Bottom: Delucenay's Antique and Realty at same location.

Corner of State Road 3 and East Albion Street (used to be Auburn Street). Dolan House on the corner (used to be Noah Hill's house and tavern).

Bottom: On the left is S.K. Randall's Emporium (was since then Kokenge Hardware on one side (east). See Hardware history in latter part of book.

Two scenes showing Auburn's street improvement (now is East Albion Street).



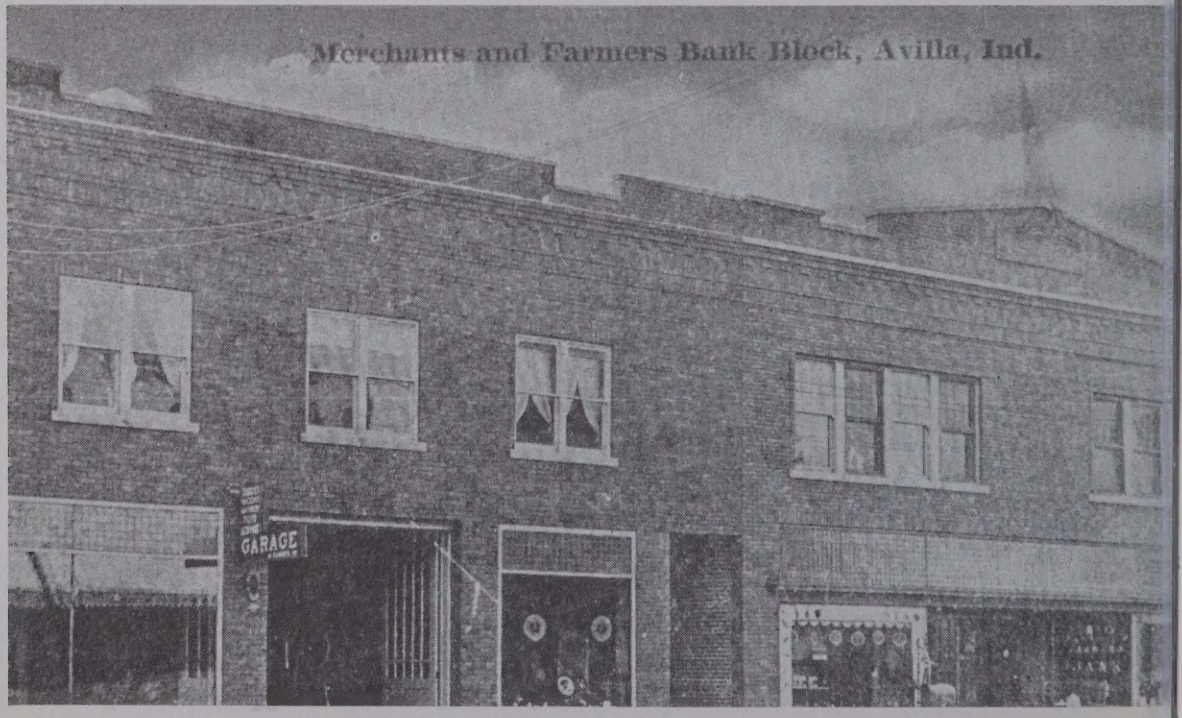
Picture of Avilla's East Albion street today. Corner building on the right is the Merchants and Farmers Bank Block (as it was once called). Used to house the Avilla Community State Bank until it relocated and Meyer Farm Equipment (is now the location of Carteaux T.V., apartments, and Bob Uhl's insurance office). (Riley Hostetter uses part of the building for a storage place.)

Bottom: Is front view of the building.

Farmer and Merchants Building

The old building (Dolan House) was sold in 1912 to H.A. Moore who divided it into three sections, and removed them to different locations and made dwellings out of them. One of the sections is where Bohnenbarger resided, one where the Marion Halfertys lived and the third was moved to the country. The Community State Bank, Clark Furniture, Meyers Bros. Garage used to be located in this new brick building.

In 1919, William G. Meyer left the farm and came to town where he opened a filling station on Albion street. The Meyer family rented the downtown building, formerly a horse livery stable, (owned by Fryer's) for more than 50 years. In 1975, Meyer moved to the south end of town on Main Street, (is now called Meyer Farm Equip



Top: On name plate right of number 18411 is Groton Engine, 10 horse power, No. 276, 1891.

Front: Monarch Road Roller Co., Groton Tompkins Co., N.Y.

Progress of Tractors is shown above and below.

Bottom: Ford Tractor (at Meyer Implement at location on E. Albion St.).

At quite an early day Noah I. Hill built the first house in Avilla, converting it into tavern and opening in one room a small stock of goods was known as Hill's Corn (corner of East Albion and State Road 3).

Dolan House

Next was the Michael Dolan family who came to Avilla in the spring of 1880 an operated the Dolan Hotel until they retired in 1910. It was famous for miles aroun for its hospitality and good home cooked meals, all you could eat for twenty-fiv cents. Dr. Veazey took his meals here the eleven months prior to his marriage. In th years before his retirement, Michael not only continued the business but added to h home a harness and shoe shop and also established a better hotel within the buildin

THE DOLAN HOUSE

M. DOLAN, Prop'r.

AVILLA, - - IND.

$1.00 PER DAY.

Also, Manufacturer of HAND-MADE HARNESS of all kinds.

Top: East at intersection of State Road 8 (Auburn street now Albion St.) and State Road 3 (Lima Plank or Mongoquinong Trail). (White sign at right middle of block is Fryer's Livery.)

Bottom: Looking South at same intersection.

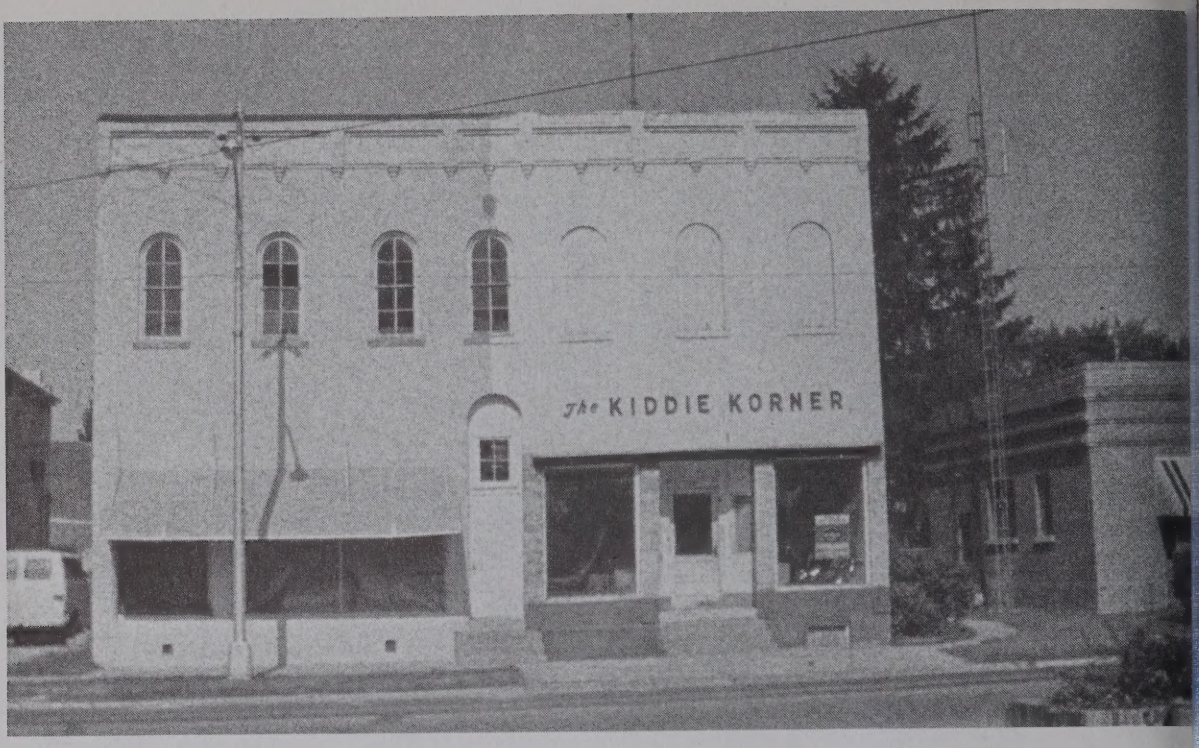
Looking south on Road 3 or South Main Street: From the Dolan House on the left and on down is: Dolan Harness (awnings), a Laundry (not known who owned it), Avilla Bank (Farmers & Merchants) run by Saul Baum, Masonic lodge in top part of brick building, Dominic Ueber's saloon in south side of brick building, Coy Hacklin's paint shop, Henney's Livery Stable, Star Cafe, Crother's grocery, store (later became Movie House). All from the brick building down burned.

Henney's livery stable (is now where City Hall stands). People are Floyd w/horse, Henney w/white shirt, unknown man, Walter Knauer, Vern Stewart, Carl Munger, Wallace Hersh. Shanline's Barber is little building beside brick building. (Our left).

Henney's: Used in cases of funerals, Mr. Henney sat up front w/funeral director and the six pallbearers would sit in the last two seats. Left side of picture: Sol Baum's Bank (Farmers and Merchants, Joe's Palace, Macklin's Paint Store.

Bottom: Man unknown but the riding is easier than above. Schoeffer's grist mill in top left.

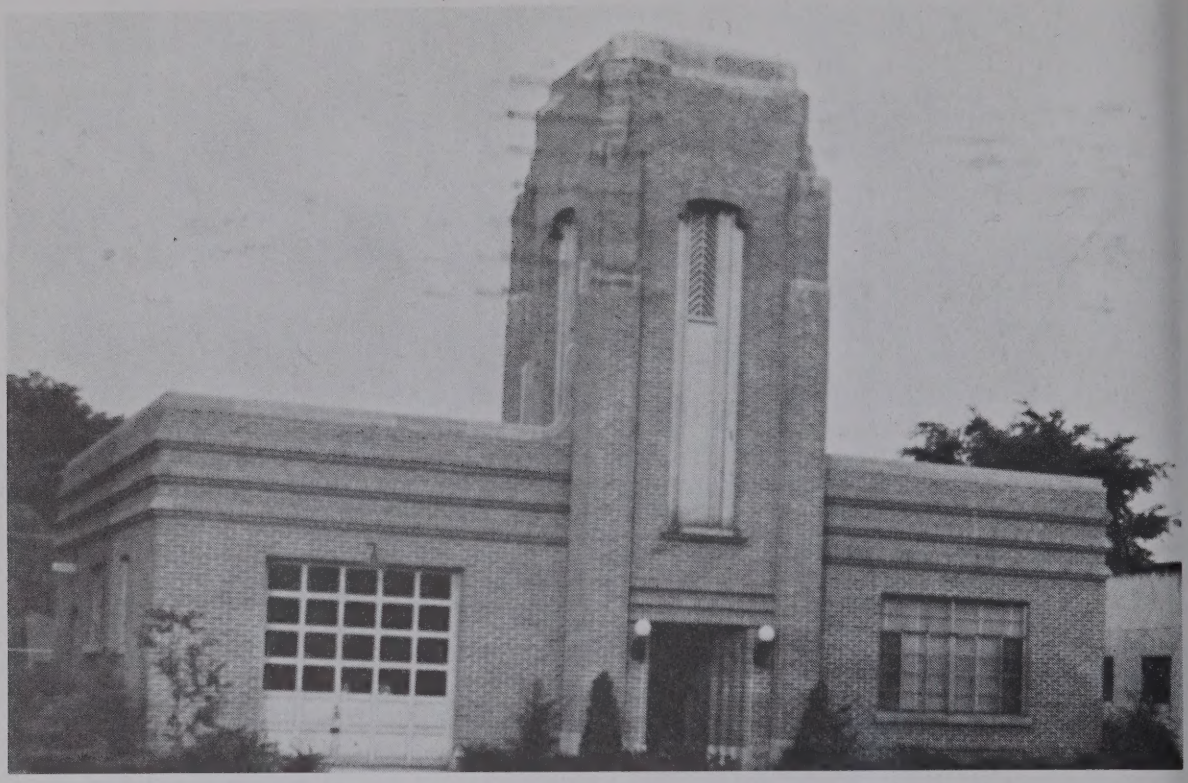
Lower picture shows front view (taken from a newspaper clipping) of the Dolan Harness and Shoe Shop that can be seen at the side of the Dolan House (upper picture.)



This building (built in 1873) used to house a grocery store (Wolf & Fisher shown in picture below), Haines Co-op, Sol Baum's bank, a saloon, furniture, and the Kiddie Korner (Top of building was Masonic Lodge (one time had Odd-fellows lodge). (Is now city parking lot.)

Top: Picture shows the town hall, Kiddie Korner Bldg., and Bldg. where Bob Uhl has an insurance office.

Bottom: Picture shows some of the town's former board members. Marjorie Meyer secretary, Bob Mueller, Mr. Strock, Recy Schmenk (first to wear uniform), Nick Have, first policeman to wear uniform (seated at the end), Walter Schauweker, and Attorney Glenn Thrapp (in 1953). (Chairs shown are still being used.)



Present Town Board: Kent Garman, Bob Treesh, Ed Hindenlang, Secretary - Vivian Hockenbarger, Deputy Sec'ty. - Jean Traxler, Judge - Bill Davenport, Attorney - Dave Laur, Policeman - Bill Miner.

Below: Pictures show the town hall with and without its top.

Avilla Band marching on Memorial Day 1916 or 1917. (Background is old stores mentioned throughout the book.)

Avilla Tap

Used to be Carteaux Tavern, Schuttleworth's general store and groceries. Parking lot is where a Mr. Pieper used to have his business, also a Phietgner's had ice cream store, News Office, and Henry Hanlon's Store, Dr. Veasey used to have his office in top part.

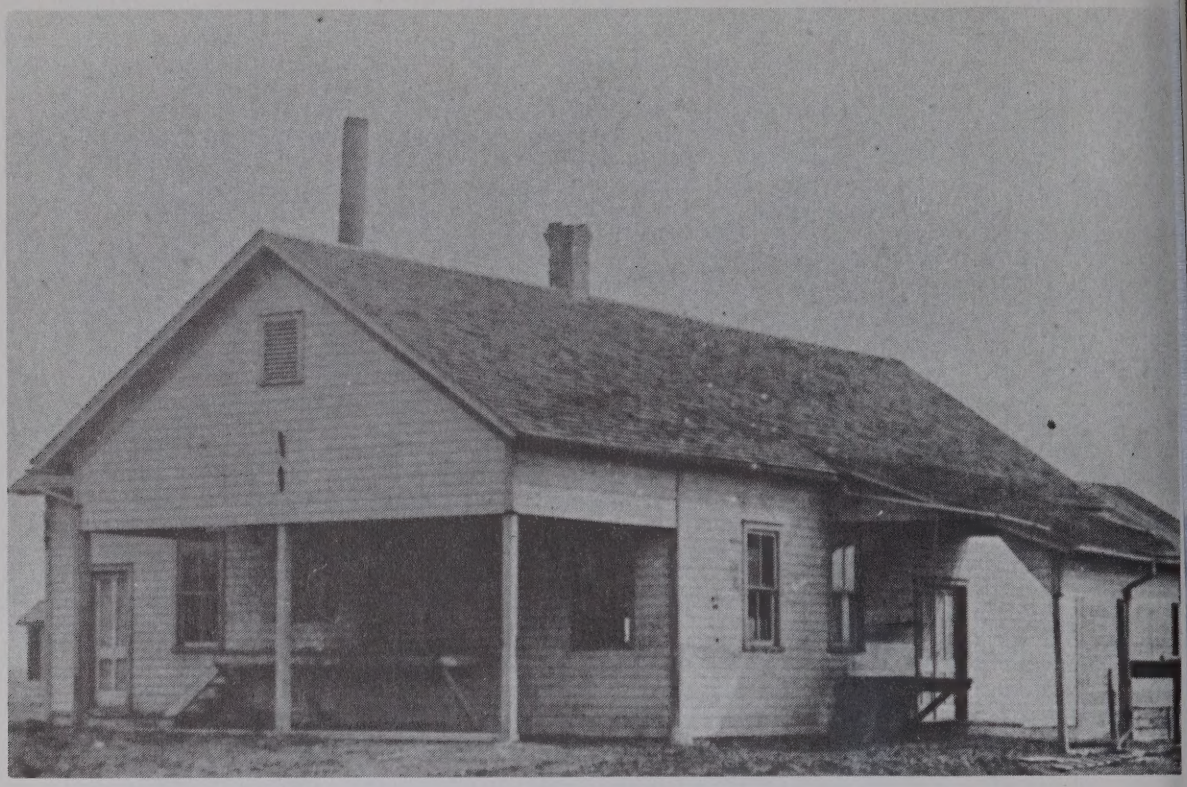
Today's View

Top: Mark's Pattern Shop (used to be Leitch's meat market, Brumbaugh meat market, Vanderbausch's). Bottom: Brumbaugh's Meat Market.

Sample Room: Weimer with beard is Alma Ott's grandad. Dominic Ueber with apron. Is now Dave Rose Insurance, (was Larry's Leaves, Pat's Cafe, Pool Hall, and others).

Top: Looking West on Auburn Street (East Albion). Koon's market on the right corner.

Bottom: Looking West on East Albion St. as it appears today. House on corner is Kathryn Delucenay's (used to be Tarleton's).

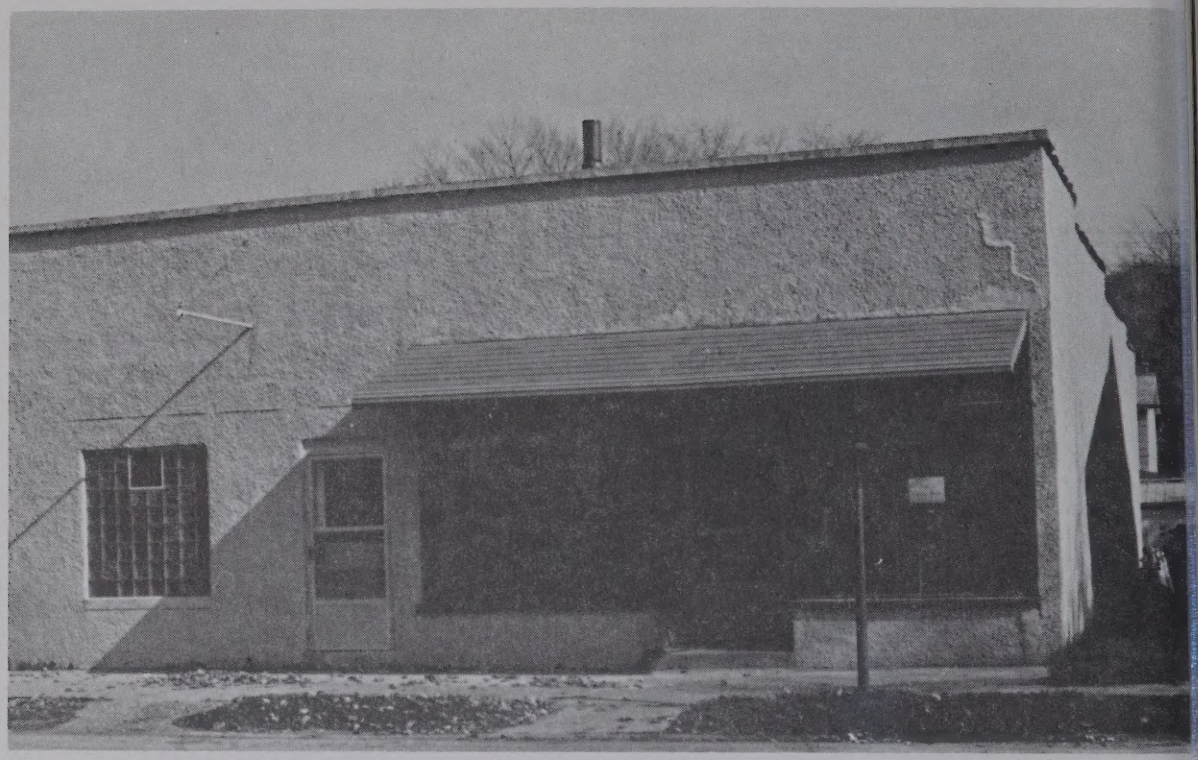


Top: Picture of old creamery located on corner of old ball diamond (Cherry Street and Walnut St.) in front of Paul Van Gorders' house.

Bottom: Old creamery store located in space between Wolf's Tin (used to be Doctor Maloney's office) and Shorty Ellert's barbershop (corner of Van Scoyoc and Albion St.).

Top: Looking west on Albion street (Shorty Ellert's Barber shop on left corner). Used to be Dr. Maloney's office, Joe's Tin Shop, Oliver Rieman and wife's barber shop, post office (with Mrs. Baum and later Fern Dolan as Postmistresses).).

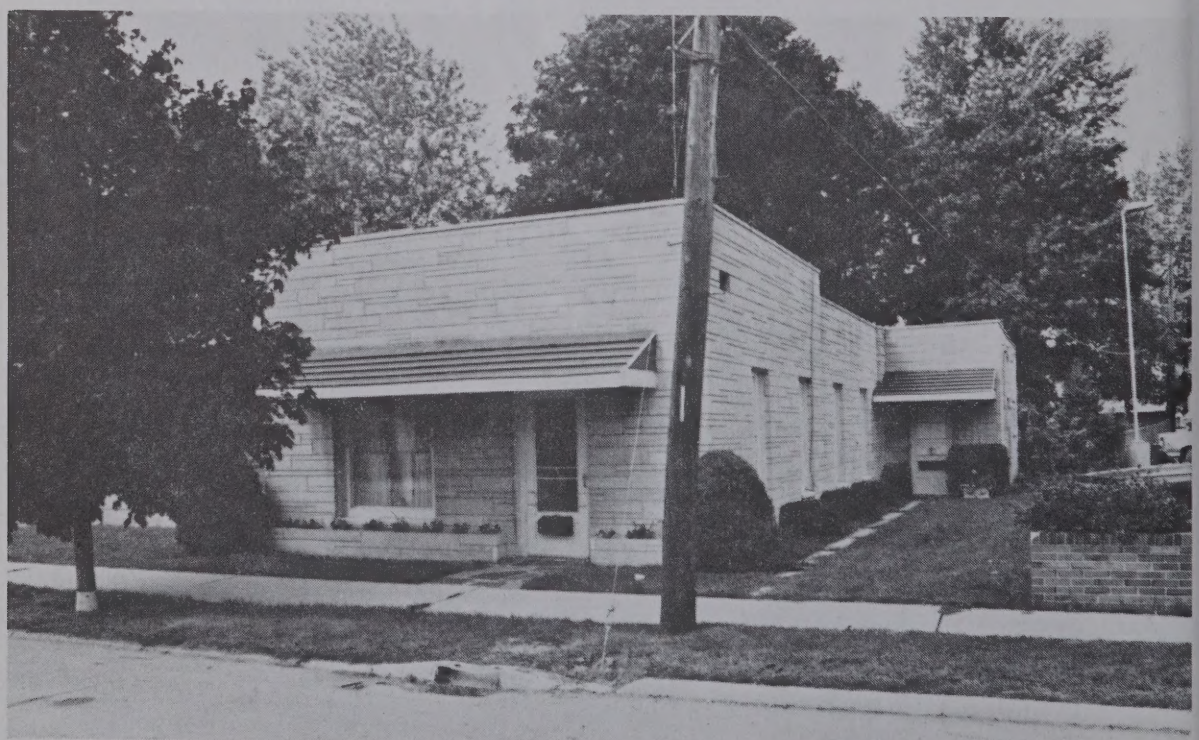
Bottom: Looking west on Albion street from Road 8 across the old G.R. & I. (Interurban tracks) and the old Penn Central R.R. tracks.



Aug. 14, Sept. 18, 1879
A 7-column folio paper was once published by Edward D. Haines. The paper only lived about 6 months. Type setting and printing was done at Ft. Wayne. *Ref.: Avilla News '23, 1893.*

Top: One of the homes of the Avilla News, (one time Crothers Grocery)(others have been a building that used to be in where the Avilla Tap's parking lot is now, where the Pizza Inn is located now, in the building (now the home of Mrs. Cooper, shown below). At the present time the Avilla News is located in the office in the west section of Delucenay's Antique & Realty.

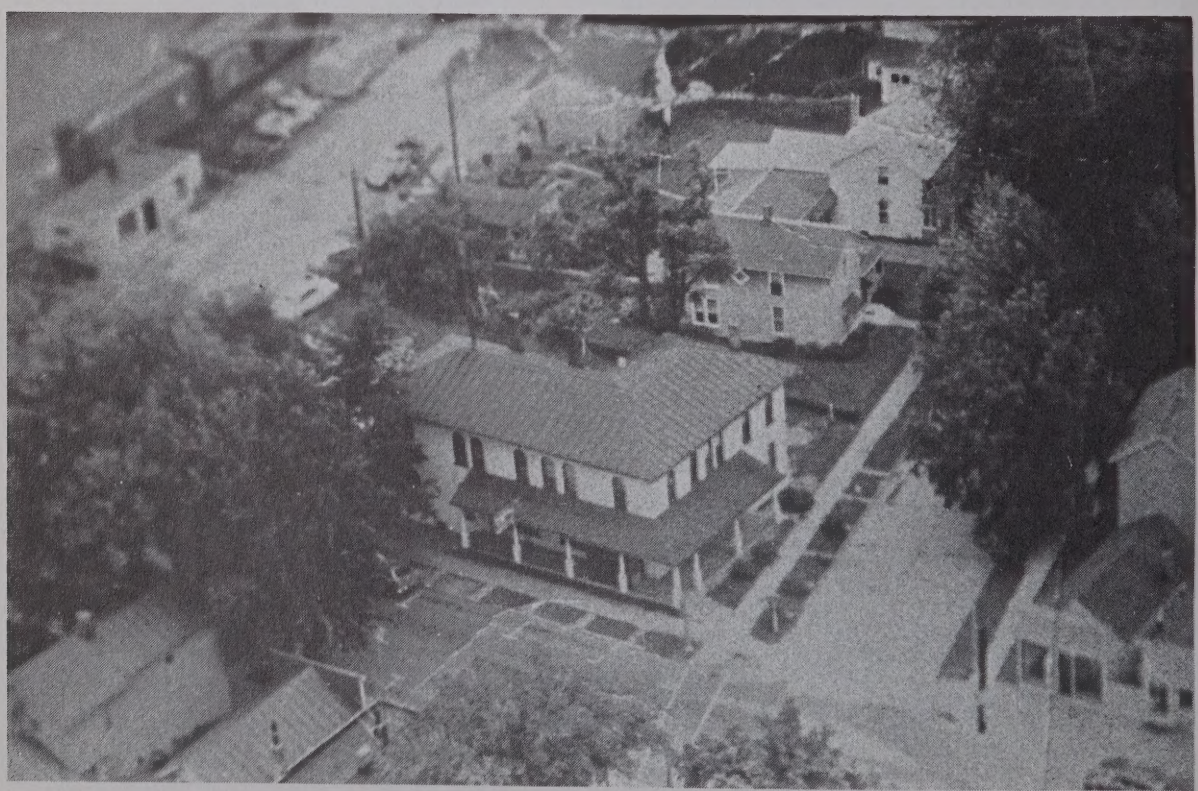
Bottom: Once home of Avilla News built by Yeiser & Hooper, editors.



On April 20, 1878, a Mr. Stahl sold to Mr. Jonathon James land for $260.00. On this he built what is now the St. James Hotel. In 1889 Jonathon James (widower) sold St. James to John A. Miller (he sold to Cyrus Miller and Anna Miller (1905) they to Fred Schmenk and Emma, they to John and Thersia Ueber (1908), they to Robert Platt - Nov. 29, 1915. To date, the Bill Freeman family, present owners, Jonathon James (founder who died Feb. 15, 1891), Uebers, Platt, and others have helped the St. James Restaurant become the fine restaurant that it is today. The hotel's history dates back as far as 1876 (when it is believed James began building it) and the hotel has been recognized as one of the oldest in the state.

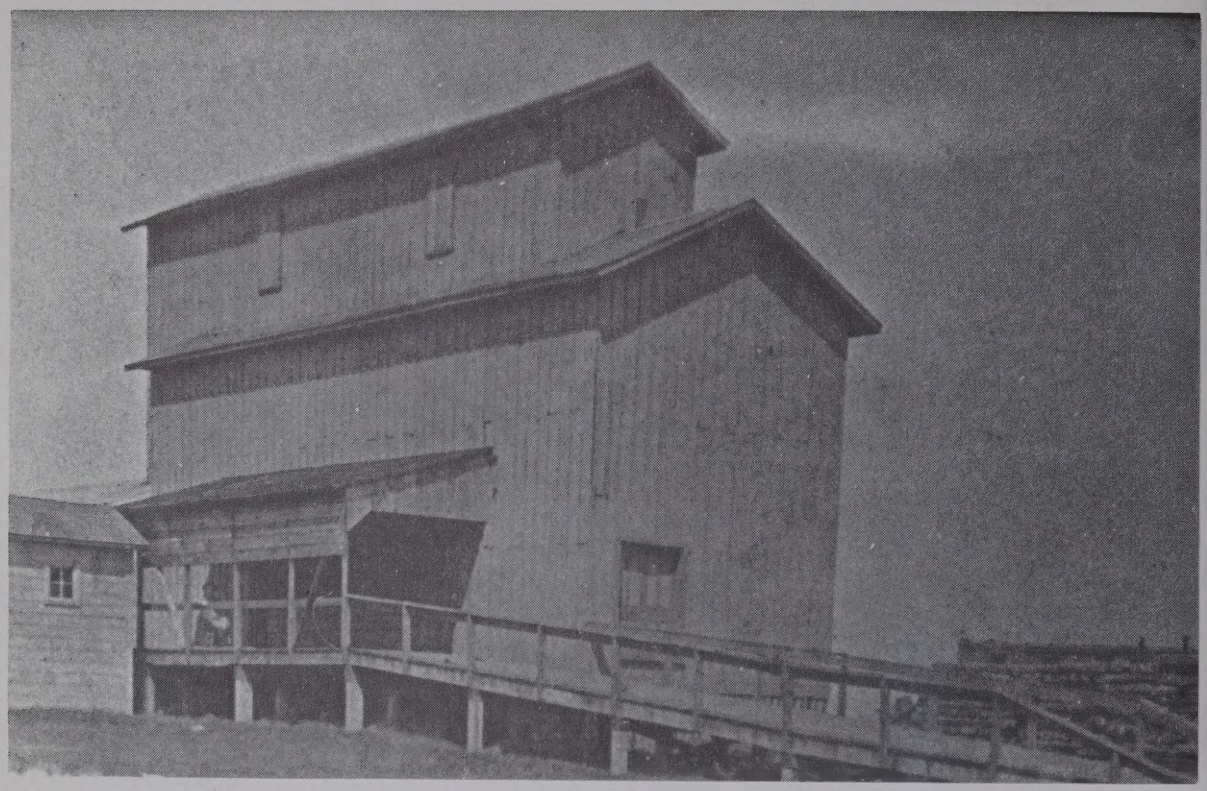
Top: Picture of St. James early 1900's.

Bottom: Birdseye view of St. James in center of picture, believed to be taken near the middle 1900's.

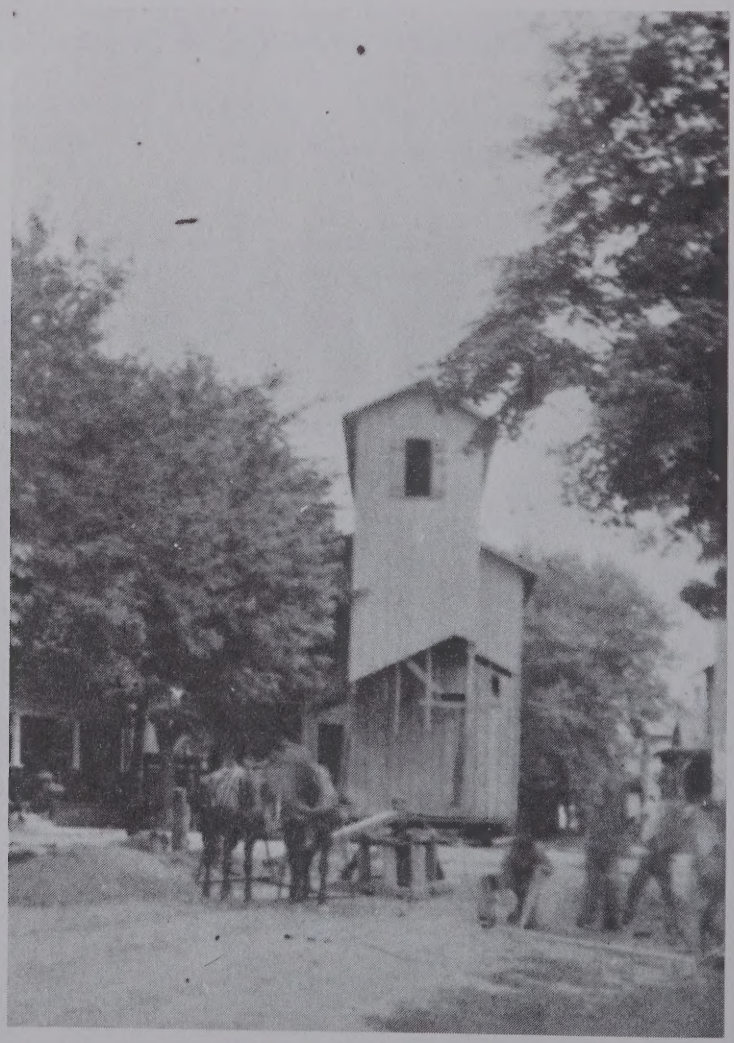


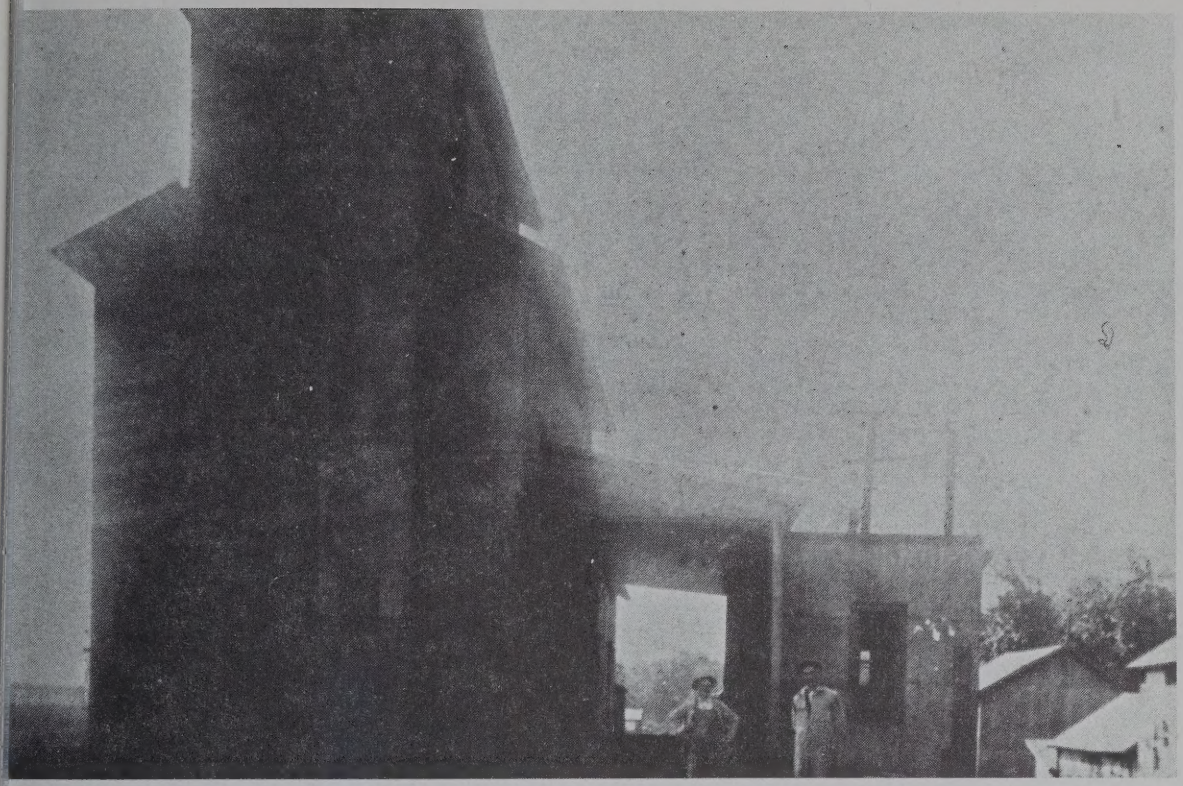
Top: Picture of St. James at present date: showing new addition toward the south end.

Bottom: Side view of St. James as it appears today.



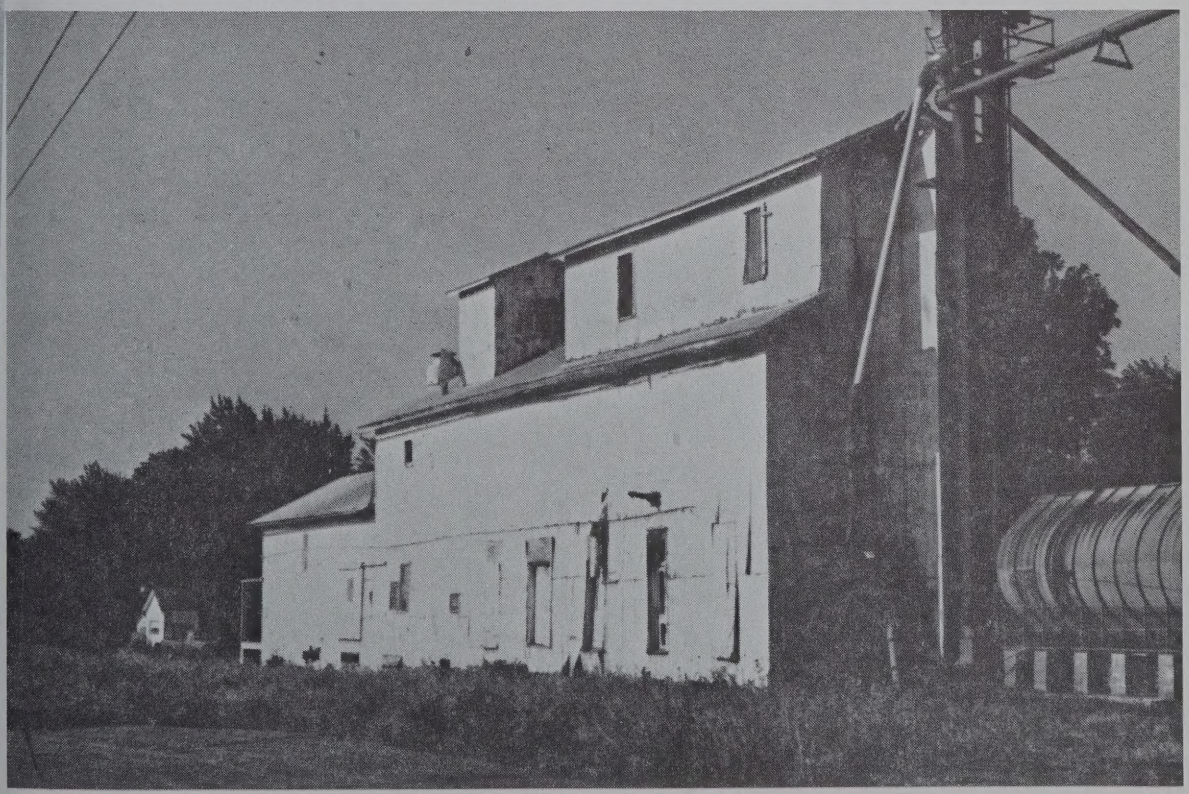
Top: Elevator in Avilla. Bottom: South Mill being moved to its present location (behind St. James Hotel, Albion St.).



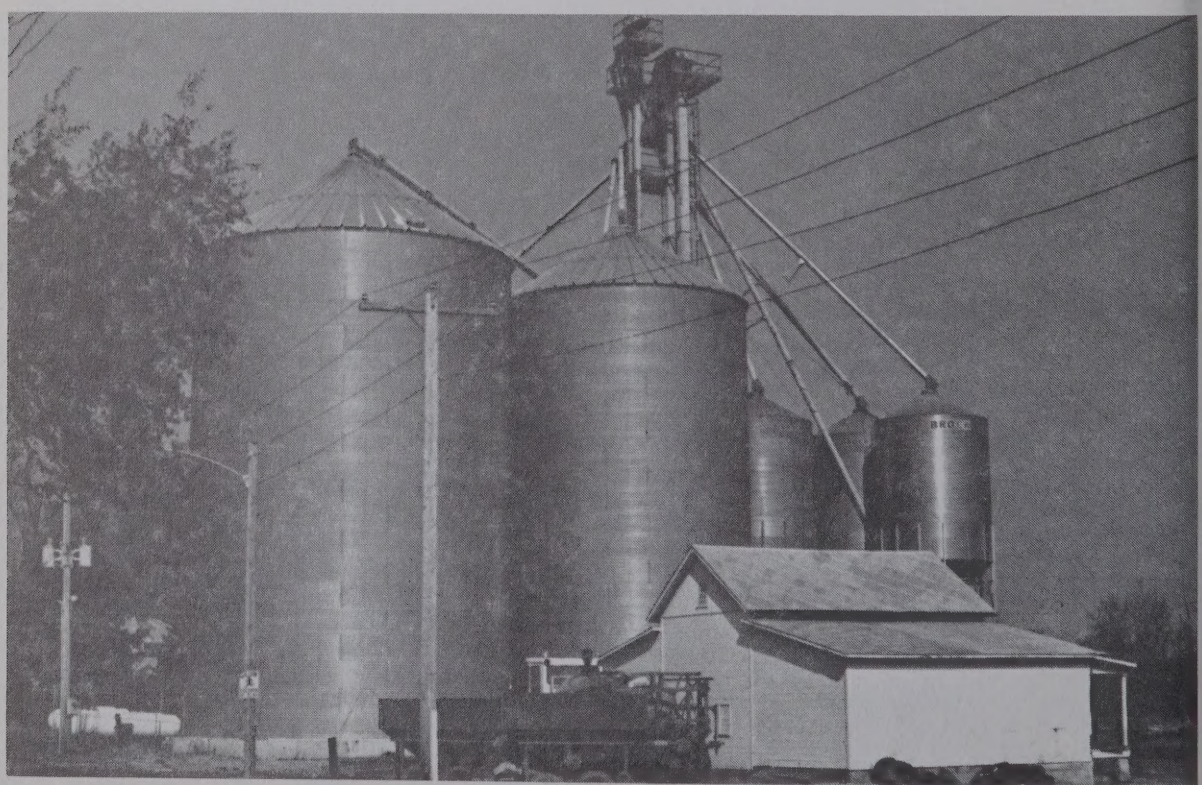


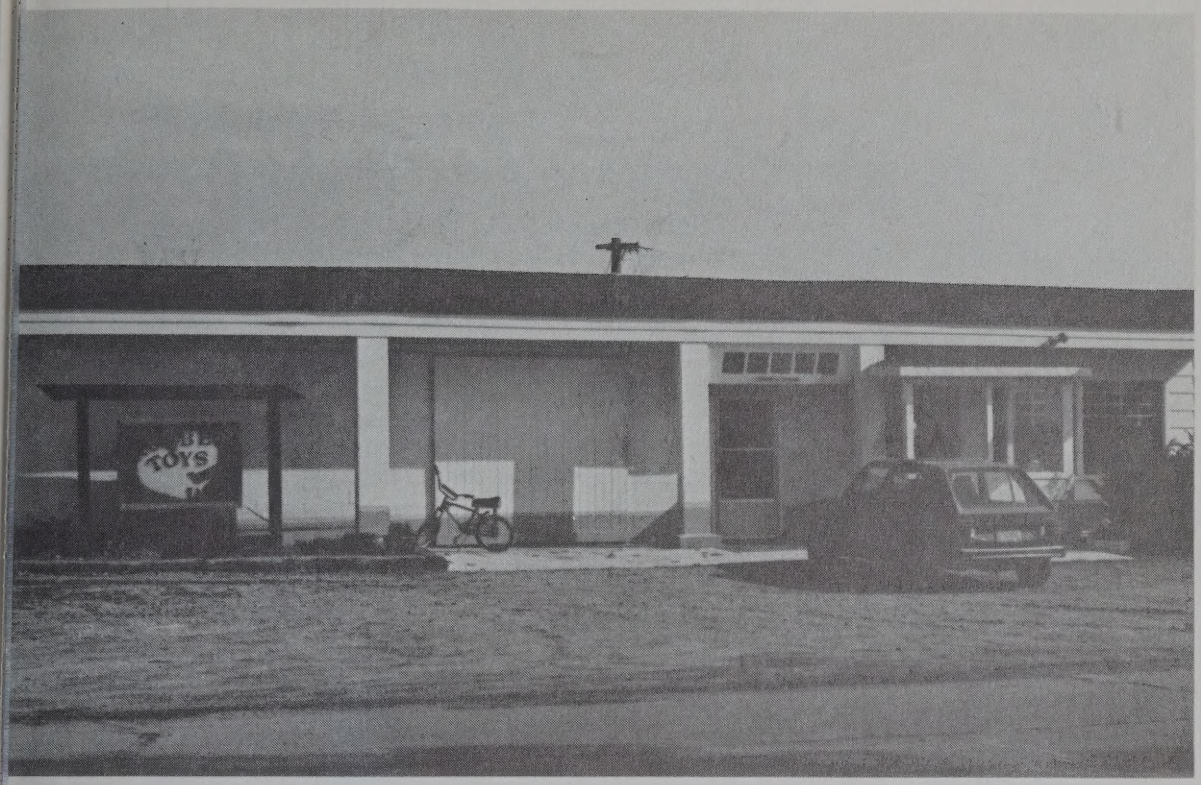
Top: Avilla Feed mill after it was moved to the north end, (man on left was Frank Ley).

Bottom: Avilla Feed mill as it is today still located on East Albion Street. Ralph Housholder, owner.



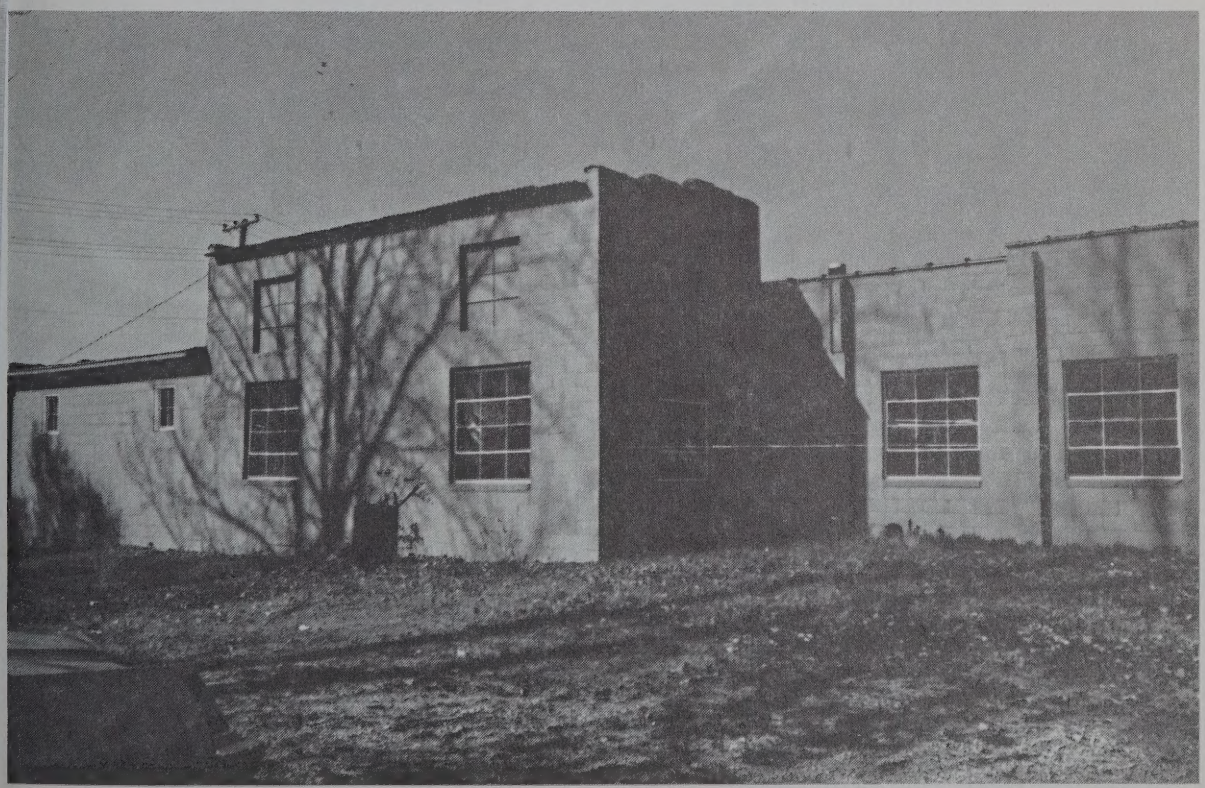
The Avilla Feed Mill (one time owned by Hilkert) was purchased from Billie and Keith Martin in 1959 by Ralph and Wilma Housholder (present owners). These two pictures show the business at the south end of Avilla on Van Scoyoc St.

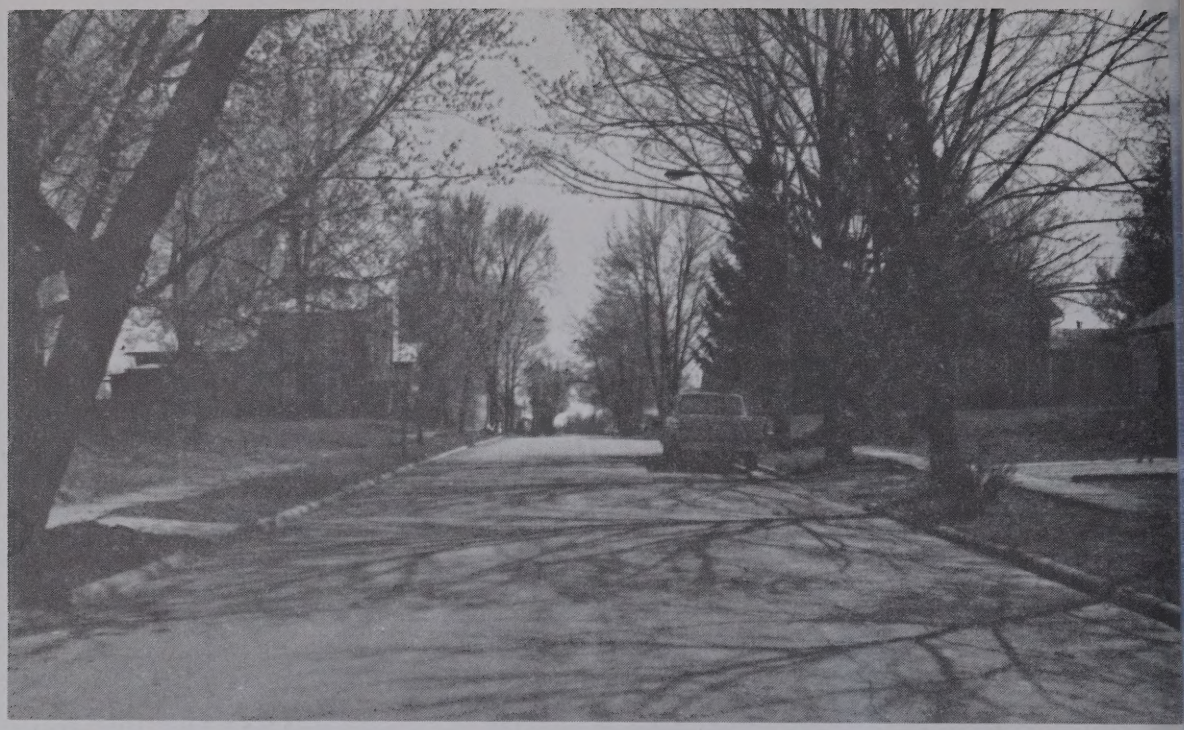




Top: The Rubber Toys "Unique" Inc. is located where the Avilla Lumber company used to stand. At one time the Yeiser saw mill was located near by.

Bottom: Building is now Barkleys' machine shop, (used to be a foundry), located at So. Van Scoyoc Street.





Looking south down Van Scoyoc Street - toward what used to be the American House, now the Martin Hellers' Home (to our left and shown below).

American House and Lunch Counter,

AUGUST J. TEEDERS, PROP'R.

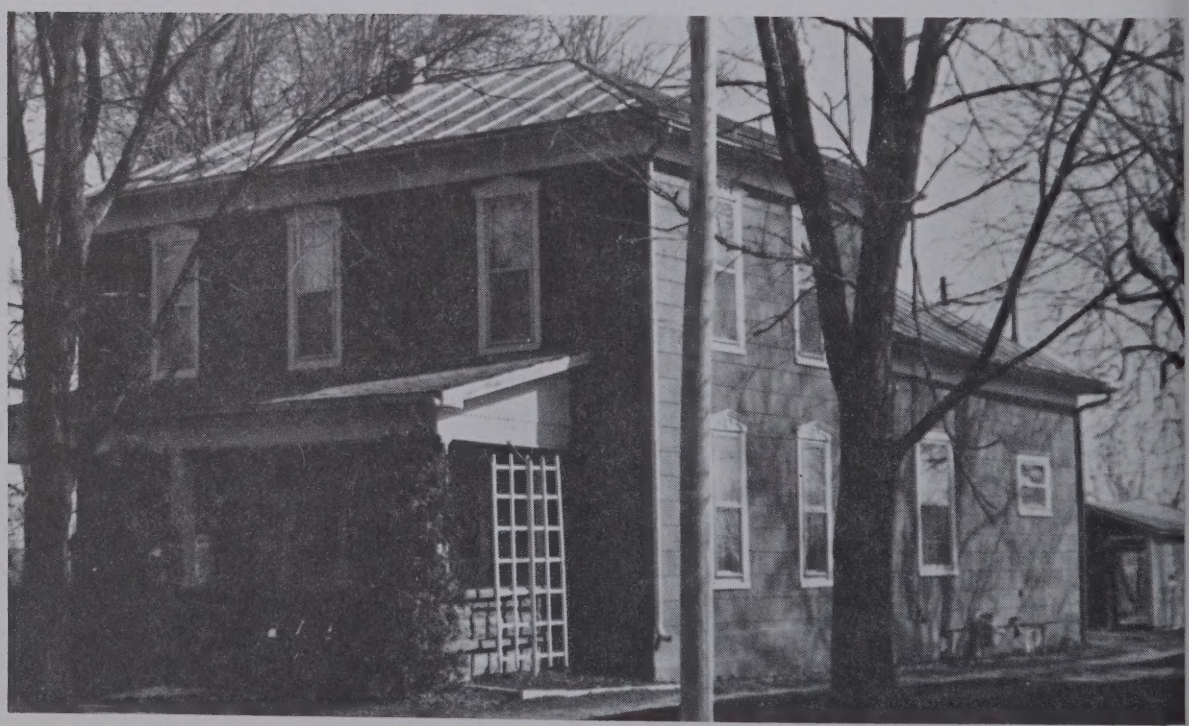
DEALER IN

Pure Wines, Liquors and Fine Cigars,

AVILLA, - - INDIANA.

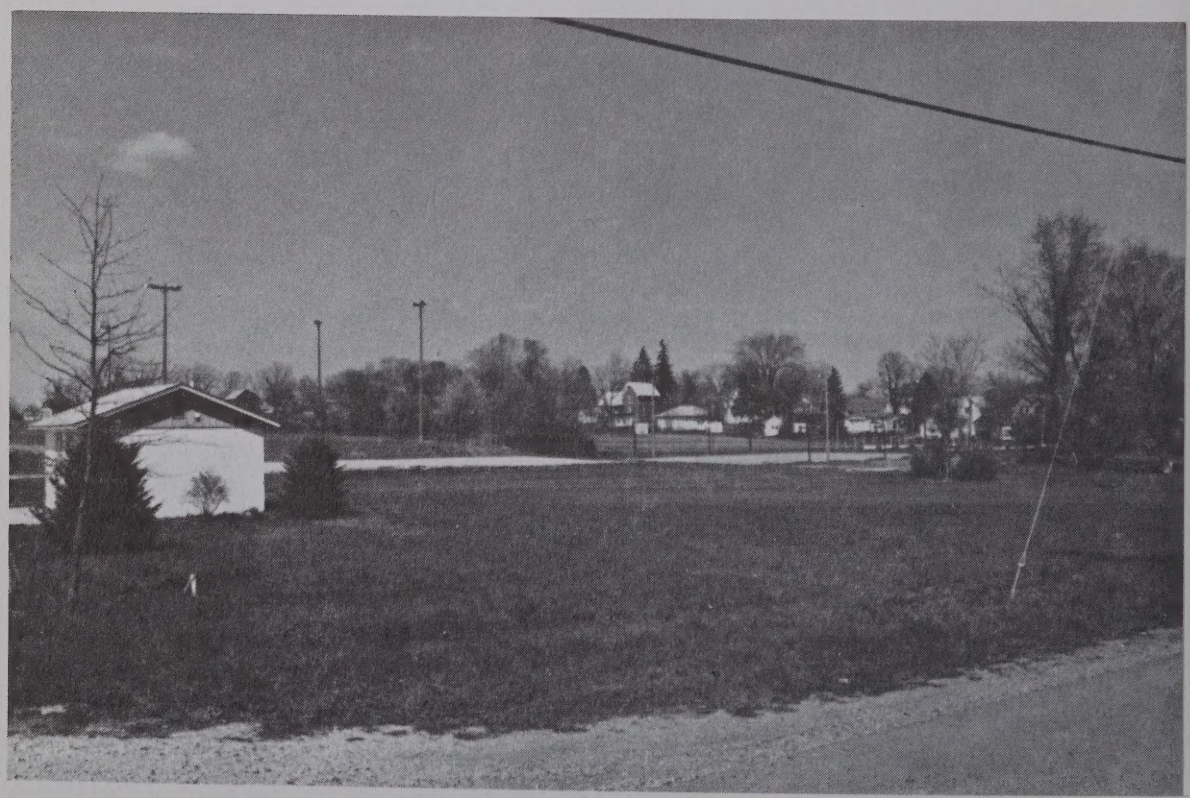
1893

OPPOSITE B. & O. DEPOT.



Avilla's City Park — Top: As it appeared during early years. Bottom: Avilla's Eley City Park as it appears to date.

Avilla Eley Park's new ball diamond and future tennis court site.



Top and bottom: St. James Hotel (on the left) looking south down Van Scoyoc Street.

First two pictures looking South on Van Scoyoc St. (past) and bottom picture shows present scene.

*S.K. Randall's Emporium at a very early date: Ads date as far back as 1893. (Since then has had Michael Dolan's shoes, Brock's Store, Furniture maker. The Villa Shoppe, Discount store, on one side)(has had tin shop at the top floor and a Hardware - Kokenge and Boszor - on the bottom). Hardware was run for many years by Alberta Boszor Koons. Is now owned by Max Pfaffman of Avilla.

*See related history on this in business history.

1893 SPRING AT RANDALL'S 1893

You are Cordially Invited

to drop in, make Yourself at home
and examine RANDALL'S

SPRING DRY GOODS

A GREAT LINE HERE
MORE COMING DAILY

You will be well repaid for the Stock is Complete and varied--it pleases the eye and fits the pocketbook.

SEE THE NEW

Ruth Dress Flannels
Figured Mulle [Curtain Goods]
Gloria Cloths - - - - -

AND OUR DEPARTMENTS OF

Boots, Shoes, Hats, Caps, Clothing, Groceries,

have not been neglected. In short, we are ready to supply your wants in any branch of our trade, and will endeavor to merit your kind favors. Drop in.

S. K. RANDALL.

Dry Goods, Clothing, Hats, Caps, Boots, Shoes

Oh, What a Fix

.....Here we are, within a month of our Annual Inventory,
.....and with— ....

An Overwhelming Stock

of Goods on hand—in fact, our Double Store is packed from cellar to roof. This won't do; we need money—got to have it—our goods must move! So here goes for it.....

GREAT CLEARANCE SALE

that will astonish you. Cost doesn't figure in this sale. Some Goods are 10, some 20, some 30 and some 50 per cent off; but .....

EVERYTHING IS DOWN!

.....Now is when you will appreciate low prices—for Holiday purchasing. This is no
.....bluff. Come and let us quote you prices. We lead, always.

S. K. RANDALL.

Jewelry, Gent's Furnishings, Groceries, &c, &c

HISTORY OF THE AVILLA HARDWARE

1876-1977

The brick structure building was the first General Hardware Grocery, and dry goods store in Avilla, built by Baum, Walter & Company in the middle 1800's (somewhere between 1854 and 1878). In 1878, S.K. Randall purchased it and operated it for a period of time. The building is believed to have been built with the brick manufactured by Maternus Blust. Years later it was sold to Charles Kokenge and Peter Dolan. Kogenge had the hardware (he also run a tin shop along with Jos. Stoeckley upstairs), and Mr. Dolan operated a shoe store in the front part of the west side and ran a thriving place in the back part. In 1918, Ray M. Boszor and Ed Kokenge (son of Charles) purchase the Hardware and Tin shop from Charles Kokenge's widow (used to live in the big house across from Catholic church). In 1948 Alberta Koons (Boszor and father operated the hardware, until his death in 1950. July 15, 1977 Avilla said goodbye to Alberta: at that time she sold the hardware to Max Pfaffman family. Dolan's west side of the brick building was eventually sold to Brock's who operated it until the 1970's.

Avilla Hardware: See history of businesses.

Don Dolan in front of his Shoe Store located in S.K. Randall's Building on East Albion St.

The Avilla Shoppe (was Brock's and Son's Department Store for years) is part of what was Randall's Bldg.

Below: Building is now being used to build furniture.

Top: Fischer Bros. was started in 1949 by Frank Fischer (one time partner with Irvin Wolf of Wolf/Fischer Grocery located in old Kiddie Korner Bldg.) and Sons,(J.C. and Kermit.) Is now the Avilla Market, business of the Roger Marker family.

Dean's Southtown Carry-out previously owned by Jack Traxler (used to be at one time a garage and a Dairy).

Top: Used to be Jack Whan's Laudromat, David Rose's Insurance, is presently S.J. Pulver's, Inc.

Bottom: The late Hilda Munger Haines Residence (used to house Bill Pepple's barbershop). Also Schoeffer (grist mill owner) lived here.

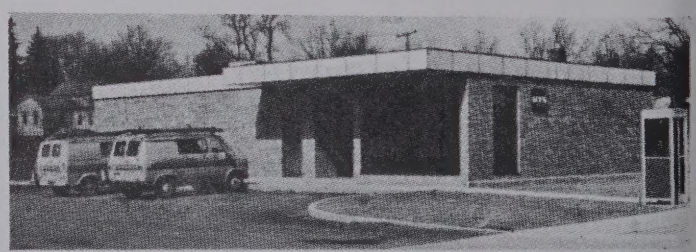
Top: Picture shows Riding Troops as they go West on Albion past the Avilla Methodist Cemetery (one time the Lutheran Cemetery). Middle: Present scene of the above picture. Bottom: Buildings in background is the Don Park's farm. Foreground is first section of old Lutheran Cemetery (now Avilla's Methodist Cemetery).

United Telephone office: Building beside Donna's Beauty Shop (used to be that) was once a shoe store. Joe Walt was repairman. (Located at 138 So. Main.)

THURSDAY, MAY 11, 1893.

TELEPHONE TALK.

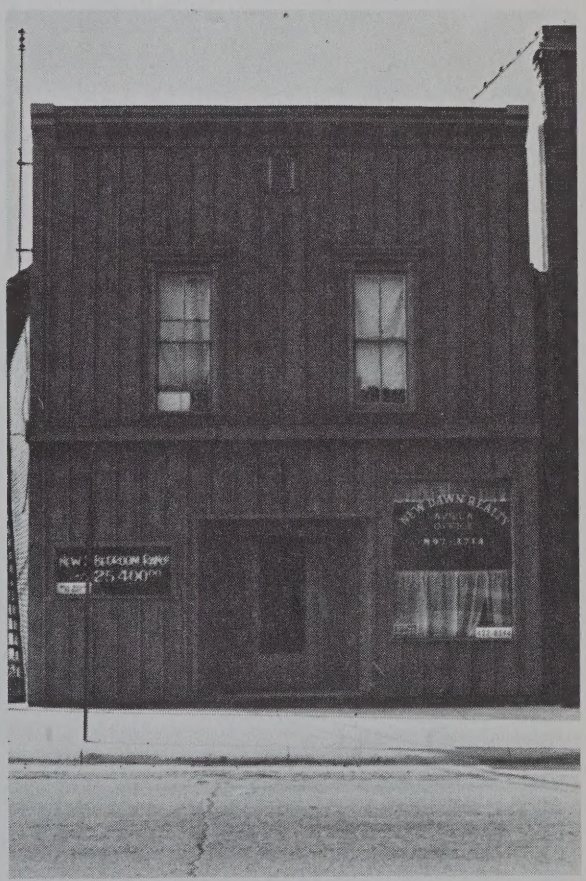
A movement is on foot, we understand, to connect Ft. Wayne, Albion, Kendallville, Ligonier, Rome City and Brimfield by telephone. The particulars of the enterprise cannot be fully learned but Joseph M. Kinney of Kendallville, says it will be a sure thing. The line will be from Fort Wayne to Garrett, then e to Avilla, north to Rome City, taking in Kendallville. A line will run from Kendallville to Ligonier. Connections will also be had between Rome City and Albion, taking in Brimfield on the way. This network of telephone wires will be invaluable to Noble county, and also place us near Fort Wayne. Anyone can readily see what advantage would result from this move, and the project should receive much support.—Albion Democrat.



The United Telephone Company of Indiana is located on Baum Street and houses communications equipment, office and phone shop.

EARLY MAIL ROUTES

There were well established mail routes along the Lima Road and the Goshen road several years before the county was organized, the mail being carried on horseback. John Hall, however, one of the early carriers on the Goshen road rode an ox. About 1844 a route was established from Wolf Lake, on the Goshen road, via Port Mitchell and Albion, to Lisbon on the Lima Road. Another early mail route is said to have extended from Good Hope on the Goshn road to either Rome City or Lima, passing through Rochester and Springfield. Several other routes were established for the convenience of localities, but not by the Government. Our Postal system began in whomever's place of business or home that had the name of Postmaster, or postmistress. Avilla's postoffice was established here in 1846. Among the known postmaster and postmistresses: Noah I. Hill 1845, S.M. Kline, Henry Baum, J.A. Hudson, Mrs. Eliza Swartout, S.P. Stewart 1875-1885, August Vogeding 1885-1888, J.L. Henry, R.S. Haines 1895-1897 (F.Y. Baum Assistant P.O.), John Decamp 1897-1905, Fern Dolan 1916, and many others. One of Avilla's former post offices was John DeCamp's store, (was the Avilla News, Carteaux T.V., Dawn Realty, Sharan Botique, and now the Avilla Pizza).

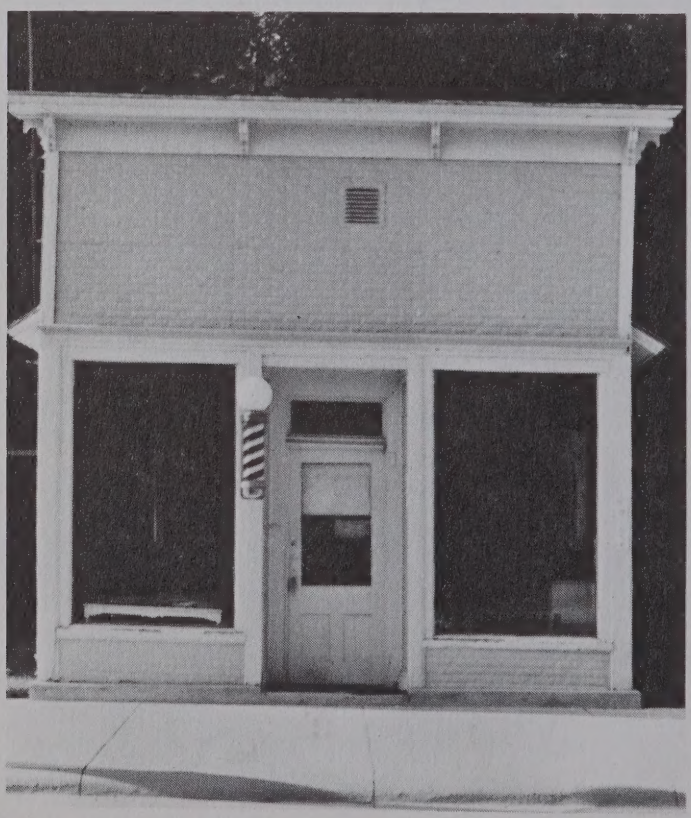


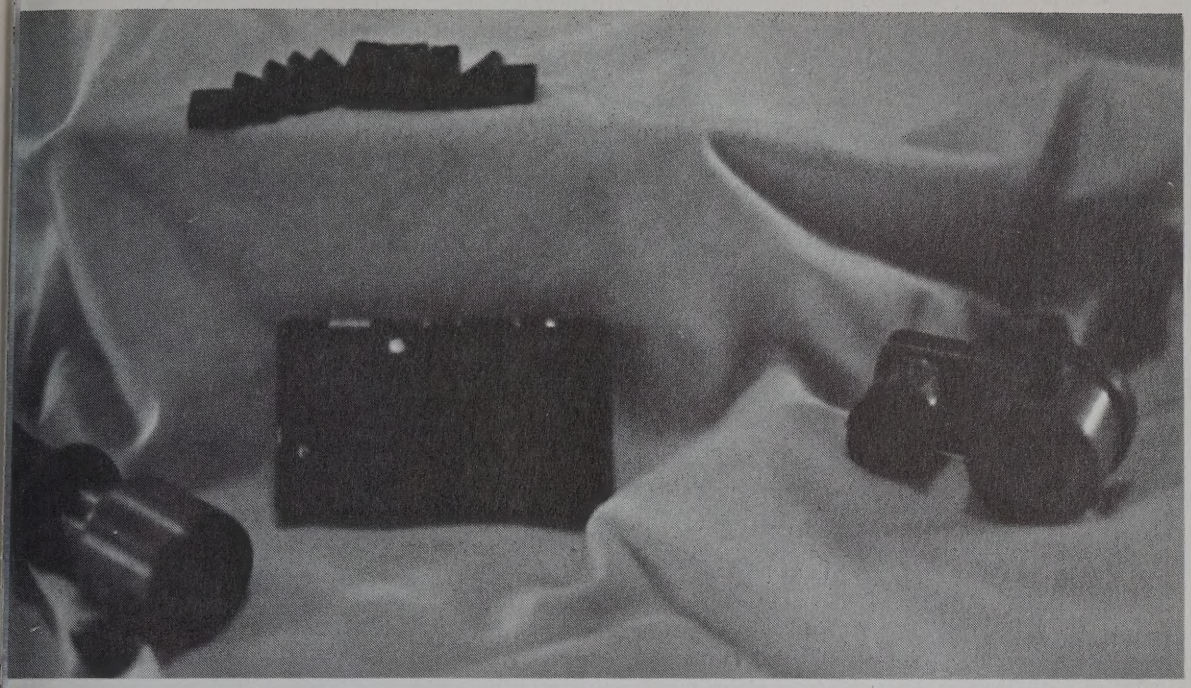
In 1905 - Left: Jim Hudson, Claude Knauer (mail carriers), John DeCamp - proprietor, Carlton Baum and Frank Stoeckley (leaning against store front.

Above: Picture of Joe's Tin Shop, later became Post Office where Mrs. Baum was Postmistress after her husband, later Fern Dolan was the Postmistress (1916). Men in picture are from left: George Martin, Robert Haines, Joe Stoeckley, and Joe Kraus (owner). Is now Shorty's Barber Shop located on corner of Van Scoyoc and Albion Street.

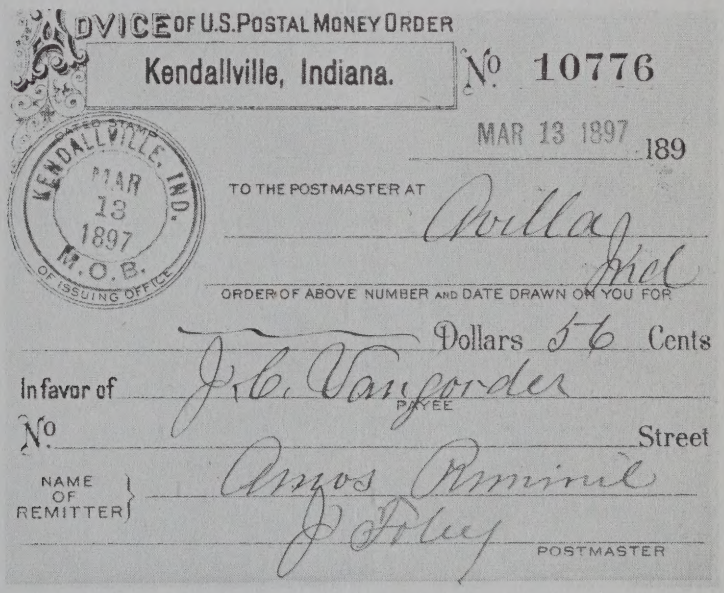
The side picture shows the mail slot located on the east side of the building, at the door.

Bottom: Shorty's Barber shop.





Hand stamps and ink pad once used by the Avilla Postmasters. Postmark on one is July, 9 a.m., 1901.


ADVICE OF U.S. POSTAL MONEY ORDER

Kendallville, Indiana. No 10776

KENDALLVILLE, IND. MAR 13 1897 M.O.B. OF ISSUING OFFICE

MAR 13 1897 189

TO THE POSTMASTER AT Avilla Ind

ORDER OF ABOVE NUMBER AND DATE DRAWN ON YOU FOR

Dollars 56 Cents

In favor of J. C. Vanforder PAYEE

No Street

NAME OF REMITTER Amos Rminne

J Foley POSTMASTER

Below is the present location of the Avilla Post Office (East Albion St.).

AVILLA FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

A banking system of sorts started because of the needs of the people of Avilla. A Mr. Steward, a one-time proprietor of a general store (now Delucenay's), kept people's money in his safe. As Avilla flourished the need for a more educated system arose. The Merchant & Farmers Bank of Avilla was established in 1901 by A.M. Jacobs and Sol Baum. Its capital $25,000 with an average deposit of about $250,000. The Institution first occupied a brick building on Main Street (the north side of what used to be the Kiddie Korner). In 1914, a new building was erected on the corner of Main and Auburn Streets (Albion) at a cost of $8,000. Mr. Jacobs was still president with Mr. Baum the active Manager of affairs. As the town grew larger, the needs were met as one more time another bank was built. This time on the west side of Main Street, where it is now located (built in year 1970). In the early year of 1981, another financial institution was added when the The First Federal Savings and Loan was built on the north corner of Main and Albion Street.

ACCEPTANCE and APPROVAL
of PUBLIC DEPOSITORY

BY

Avilla BOARD OF FINANCE Avilla

Noble co Indiana

Name of Depository:

Merchants & Farmers Bank

Place of Business:

Avilla Indiana

Date of Acceptance Jan 5th 1909

Term begins Jan 5th 1909

Term ends Jan 5th 1911

Maximum amount of deposit. $4000 & c

SENTINEL PRINTING CO. INDIANAPOLIS

AVILLA LOCAL BOARD

Fidelity Building and Savings Bank Union

of Indianapolis, Ind.

Largest and Most Reliable Building Loan Association in Indiana.

LOCAL OFFICERS:

President, J. L. Henry,
Sec'y-Treas., S. K. Randall,
Directors—M. Ries, Dr. Malony and W. F. Hadley.

☞ No other institution offers so safe and profitable an investment. You can build a home and pay for it in easy payments. It is a perfect Savings Bank, and offers unequaled advantage to investor and borrower alike. For full particulars see

S. K. RANDALL, Sec'y and Treas

RUN ON THE BANK.

The numerous bank failures of late have caused people to become alarmed at the slightest rumor. Monday morning it was reported upon our streets that the First National bank at Kendallville was in a shaky condition by reason of slow collections, though the rumor could be traced to no reliable source. Banks all over the country ceased loaning money several weeks ago on account of the unsettled financial condition of the country, and this fact no doubt lent color to the rumor. At any rate depositors in Avilla and vicinity who had money on deposit in the First National hurried to Kendallville and withdrew their cash to the amount of several thousand dollars. Their demands were met promptly, and they are now satisfied there were no grounds for the rumors. Kendallville people seemed to know nothing of the reports, but there were an unusual number of depositors there from the adjacent country. The scene is said to have been rather amusing. There was no excitement, no explanations offered or asked;—everybody kept an eye on everybody else, and seized the first opportunity to get up to Cashier Bower's window, got their money and slid out, thankful to be alive.

Bank celebrates 50 years

The Community State Bank of Avilla celebrated their 50th anniversary in the banking business February 19, 1981, the oldest banking establishment in Avilla.

The present bank was first located in what is known in Avilla as "the old bank building," on the southeast corner of Main and Albion Streets. Bank President Virgil Helmer said Community State is the successor of the old Avilla State Bank which was the successor of Merchants and Farmers Bank.

The Avilla State Bank closed during the early 30's like so many banks druing the depression years. When they reorganized on the 19th day of February in 1931, the new Community State Bank paid approximately 90 per cent return on assets. The first president of the reorganized bank was Frank Hersh.

Other bank presidents were Melvin M. Yarian, then Hersh again, J. C. Whonsetler, Wilmer P. Weimer and Virgil Helmer in 1967, after the sudden death of Weimer.

The present facility was built in 1970 and Virgil said the one thing they brought with them from the old bank was the huge old safe, and that they had quite a time getting it there. It might also be noted the bank also brought good personal relations along with them as well as the old safe.

Community State is the kind of bank where the president waves and says a friendly hello to customers who walk in or out the door, calling everyone by their first name. Virgil said a gentlemen from a Chicago firm was amazed that he knew everyone by name. In Chicago where the gentleman worked he said all banking employes are known by a number. Virgil said he just didn't know how anyone could work like that or under those conditions.

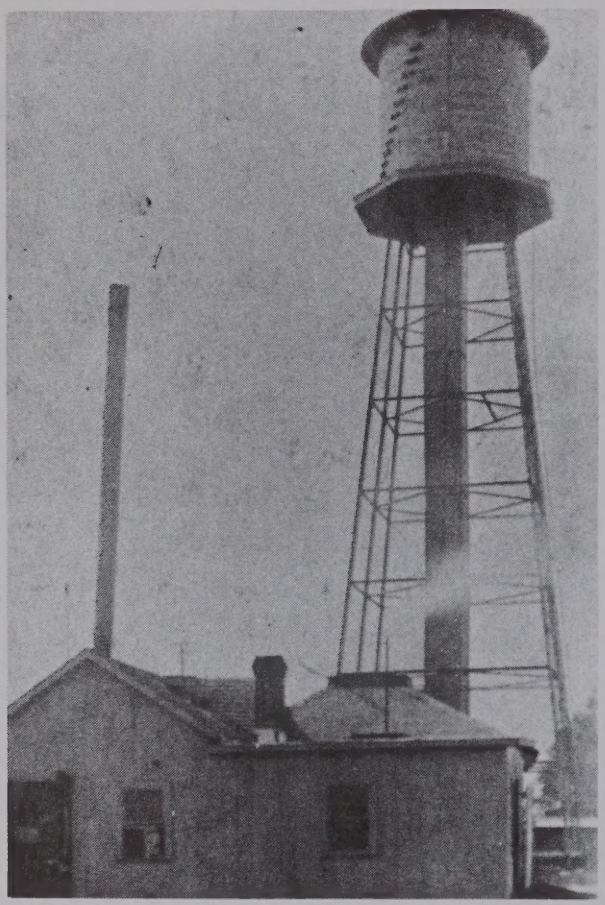
The bank's total assets today are $23-million with 39 per cent out on loan. Virgil said this was one of the lowest ratios for area banks, and noted that many banks loan out as much as 75 per cent of the bank's assets and he wonders how they can sleep at night.

The capital accounts of Community State Bank is approaching $2-million, which all started in 1931 on $25,000 when there were 250 shares offered at $100 each.

AVILLA LIBRARY

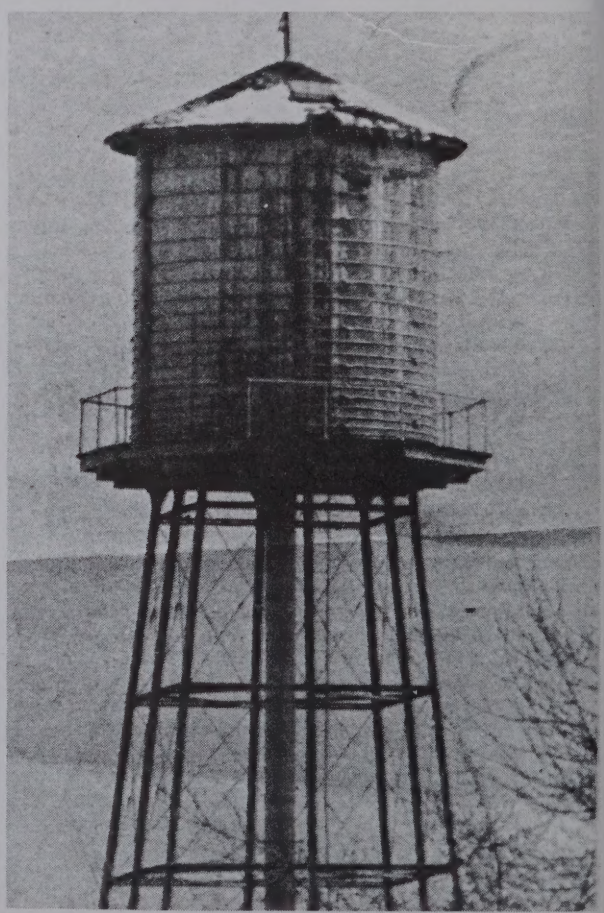
Top: Old Lutheran Church and school brought in from The Diehm farm (Lutheran cemetery) to a location behind the present Lutheran church and then moved to its present location, to be our Avilla Library Branch of Noble County Library. (Our library is a result of a lot of hard work and dedication by interested persons. One of whom was Kathryn DeLucenay). The building was set in place February 27, 1976 and was dedicated June 11, 1977.

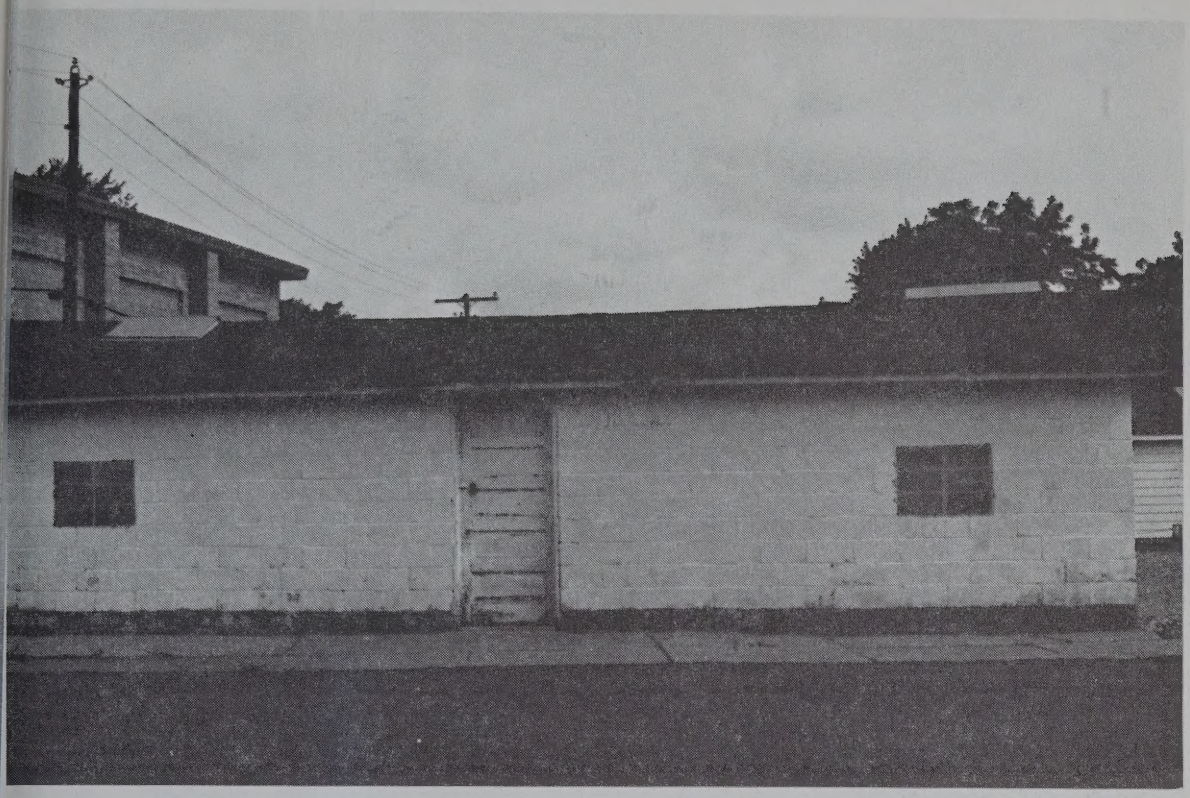
Bottom: Look East on West Albion Street toward Intersection of Hwy. 3 and Rd. 8. White building on left of street is the Avilla Library situated on Southeast corner of Aville's Eley Park.



Left: Old water tower located behind the fire station (Main St.). The waterworks of Avilla consisted of an elevated tank system, the water being pumped from wells by an electric motor. The original system was put in about twenty-five or twenty-seven years before it was rebuilt, and the pipeline extended. The power for water and light is obtained from the Ft. Wayne and Northwestern Traction Co. under contract.

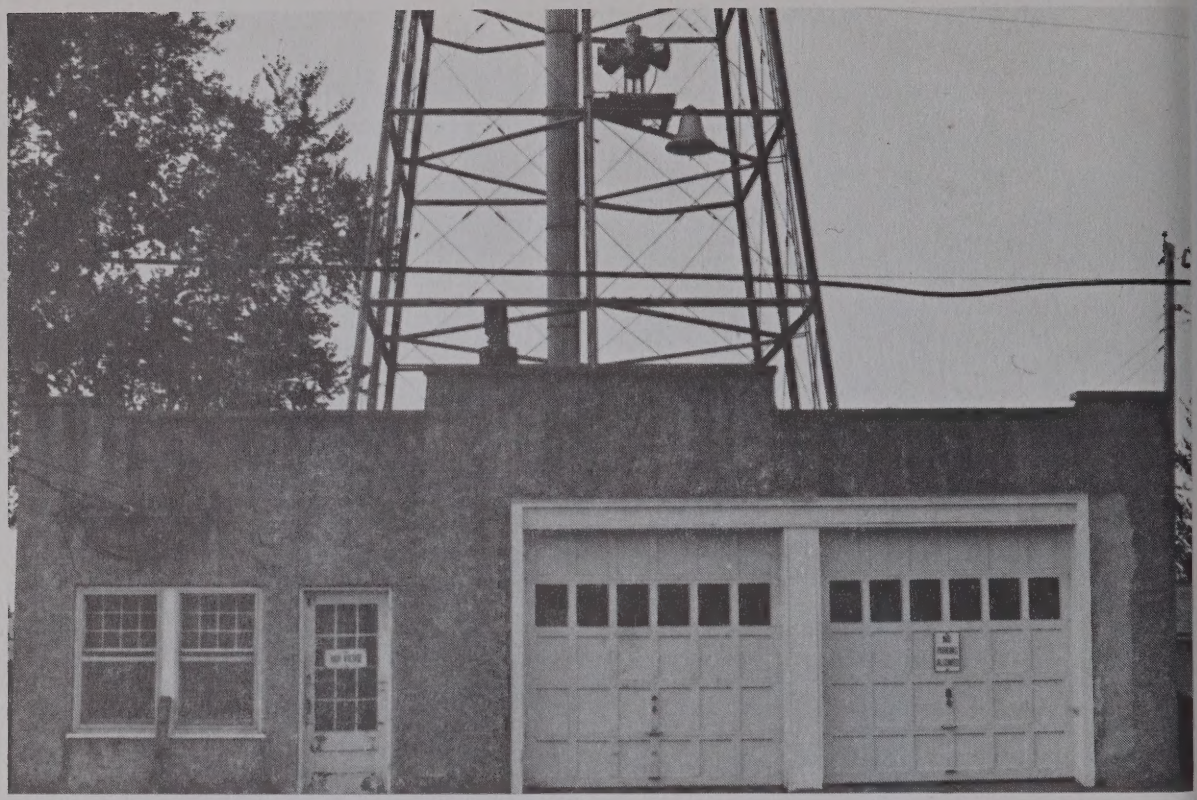
Well #1 and #2 was in building in lot of the Brazzel Funeral Home. Water tower that set behind that building used to be square (wooden) water lines. The space between old church (E.C.) on corner of VanScoyoc and Washington Streets used to have the community hydrant. Fire plug is there now. There was at one time another such hydrant down on Second St.





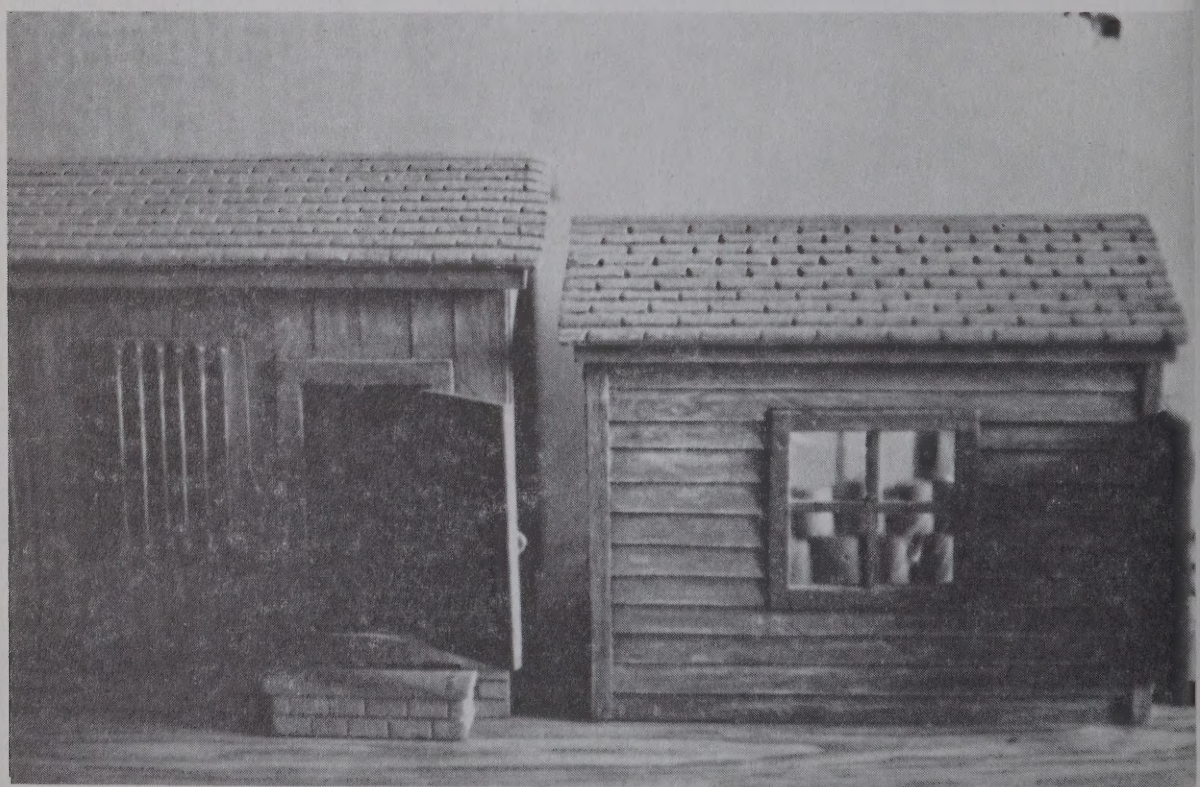
Old Well house behind Brazzel's Funeral Home and beside the alley by the Avilla School.

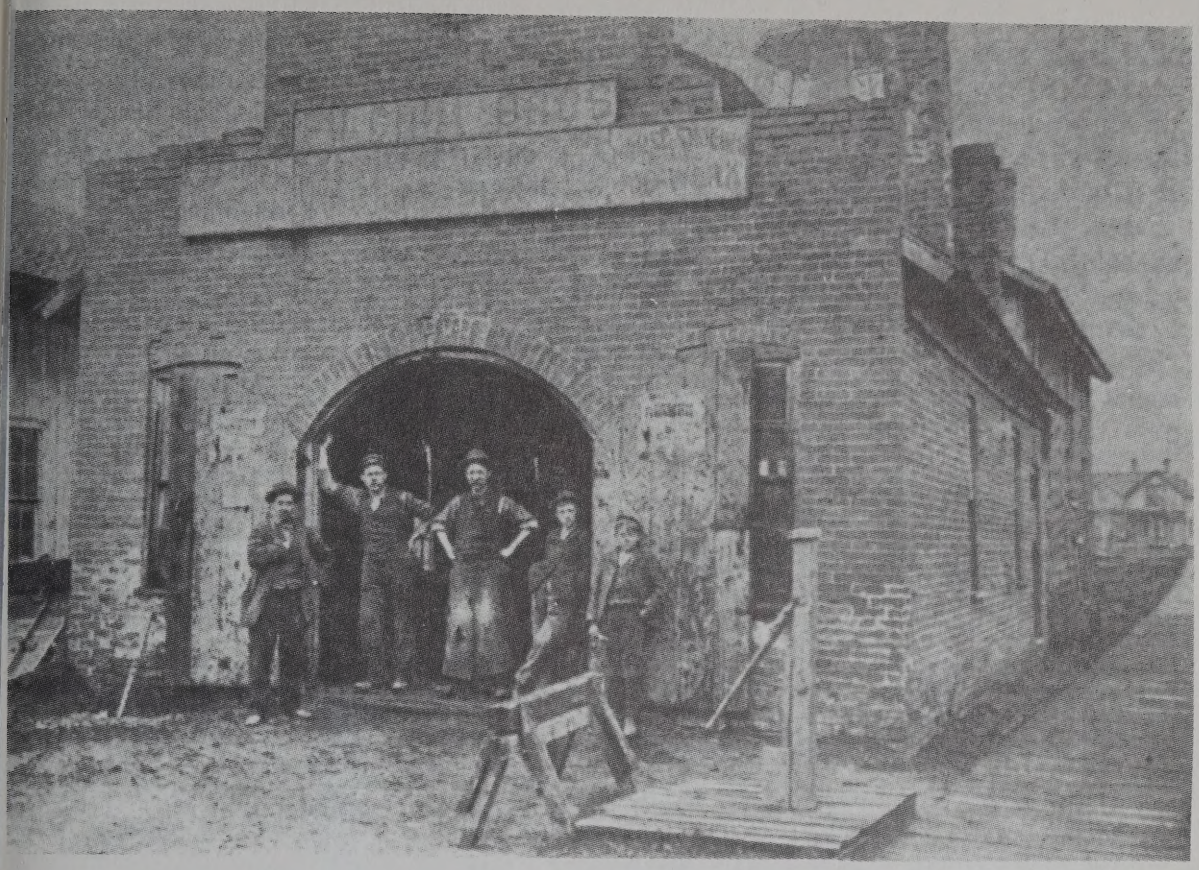
Long view looking down Washington Street toward Firehouse or station (used to be Pilgrim's Blacksmith).



Picture of city utility building (used to be old jail).

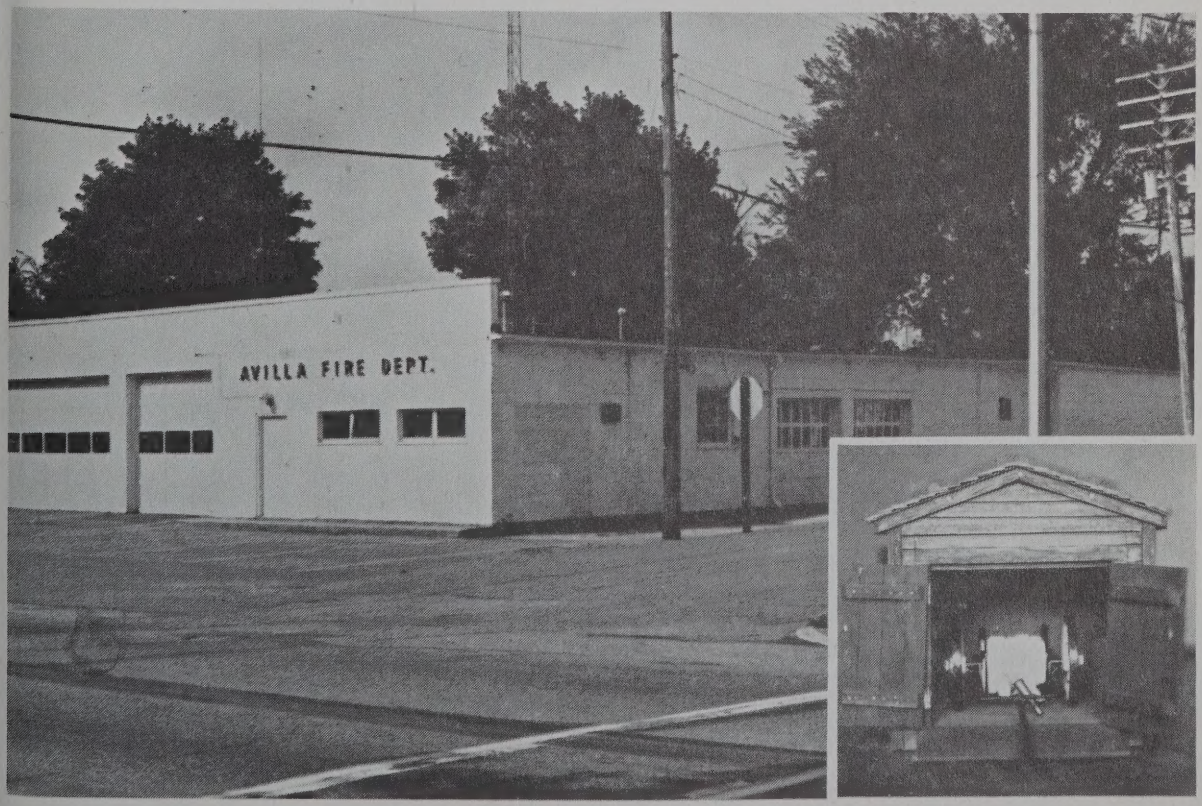
Picture of the old jail that used to be on Baum Street, made in replica by Charles Stoeckley (Father Frank Stoekley used to be Town marshall).

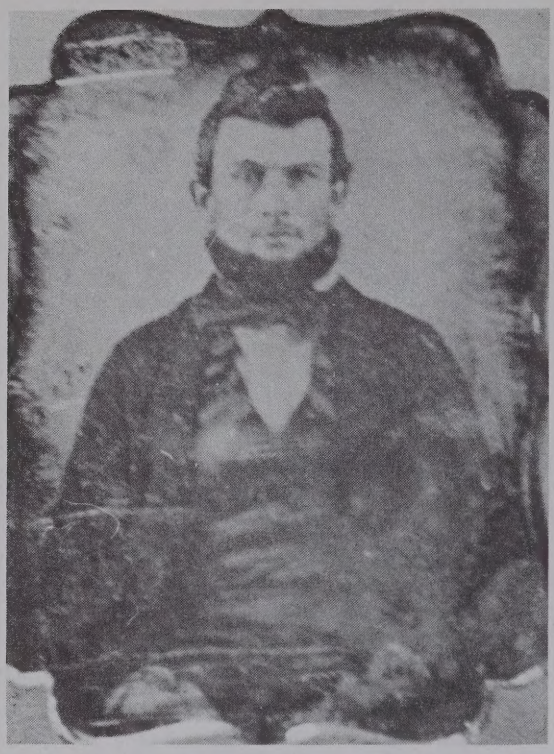


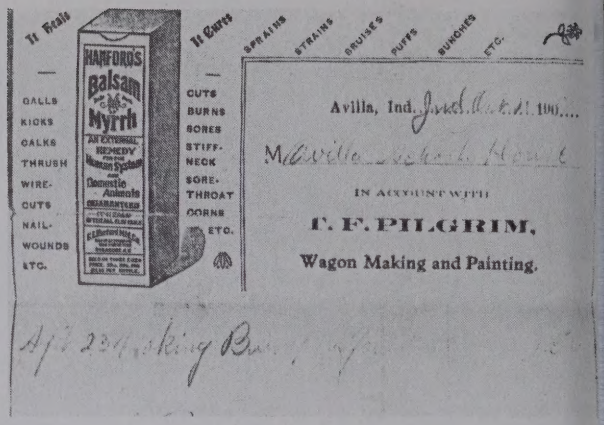


Top: Picture of Pilgrim's blacksmith shop (owned by Daniel Pilgrim then later to Theron - his son).

Bottom: Same location - Fire Station building on this corner of Washington St. and Main St. (Road 3). Is located on west side of Main Street. Insert is a replica of hand pump and fire house made by Chas. Stoeckley.







Is Invoice showing Theron Pilgrim' time of blacksmithing.

Top: Daniel Pilgrim, one of Avilla's early businessmen in middle to late 1800's.

Bottom: Pilgrim's House on Main Street (moved to east side of Calvary United Methodist Church and is now the home of Ralph Keller, on West Albion Street.) Is now the location of present Fire Department.

Home of Dr. William Veazey Avilla — Built in 1903. Previous to 1903, Henry Stellhorn's Bakery Shop stood on this location. It was a two story building with the top story an apartment where the family lived.

Fresh baked bread every morning and sold for 5¢ per loaf. Fresh rolls and doughnuts for 15¢ a dozen.

On the southeast corner of the front lawn was the small home of Lum Lobdell and Mrs. Lobdell and their little white poodle, Patsy. Mr. Lobdell took care of the street lights.

The Veazey kept the family home until after Dr. Veazey's death and then it was sold to Berhalter and Preston who remodeled it for a funeral home.

This picture was made from an earlier one, sketch by Dr. Veazey's great grandson, taken before any remodeling was done. Is now the Brazzel Funeral Home (used to be Berhalter's Funeral Home).

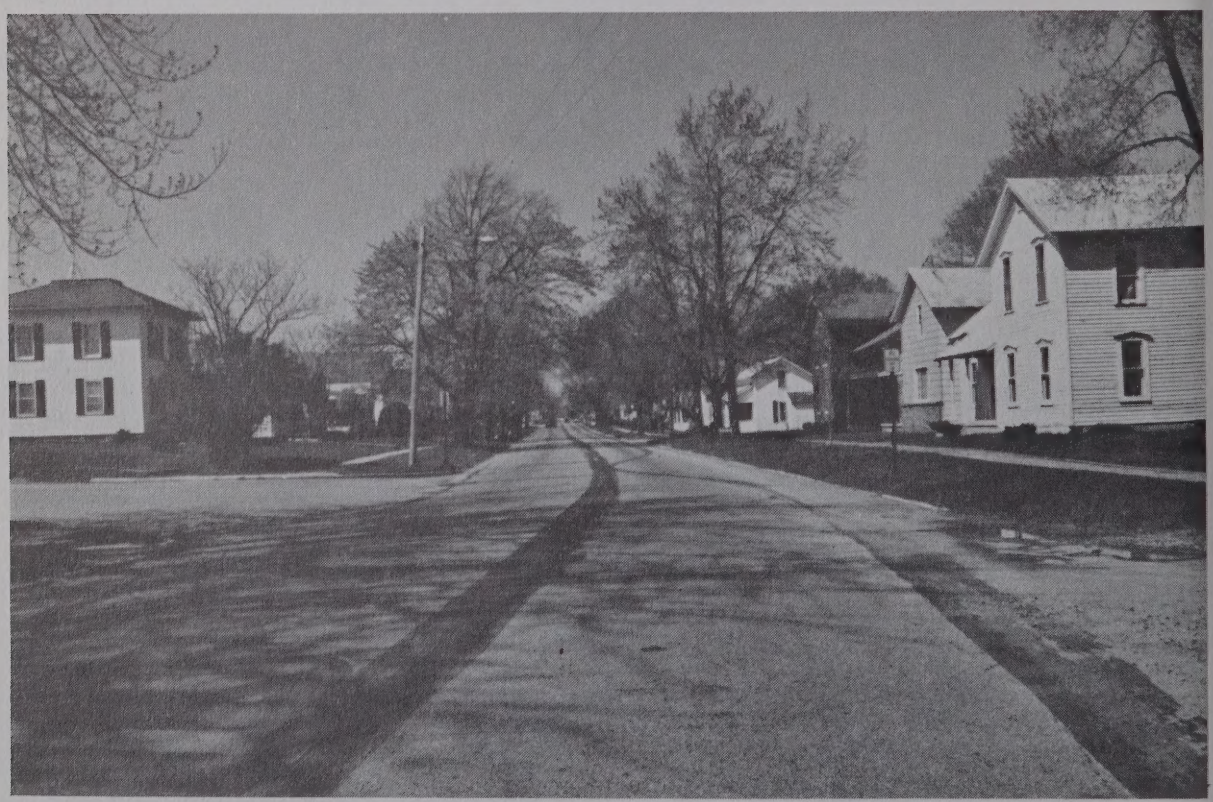
Home

of

Dr. William Veazey Avilla

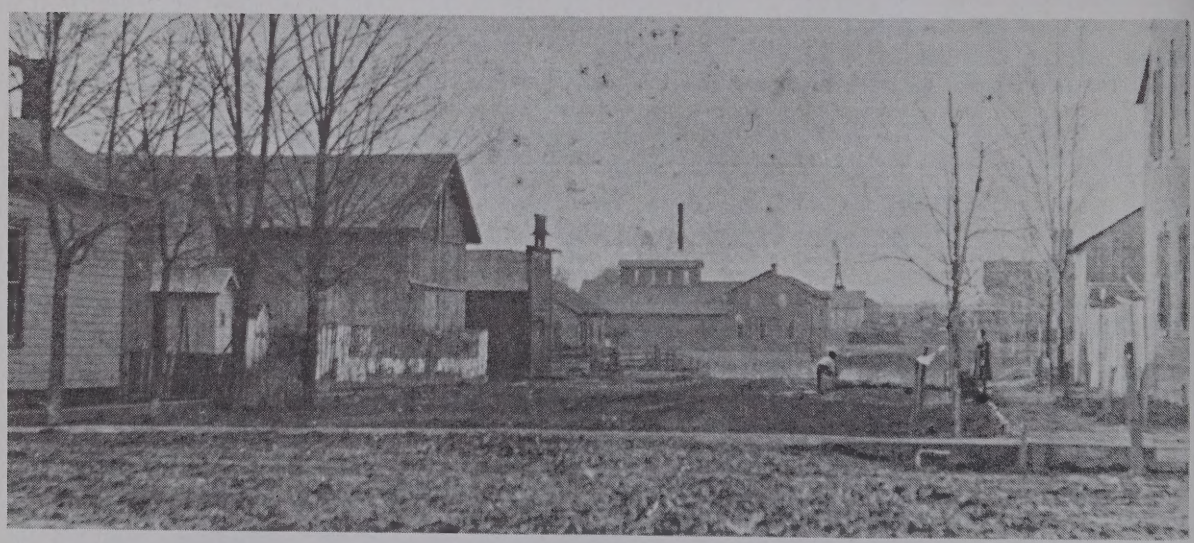
Present scene taken at corner of Washington Street and South Main looking North.

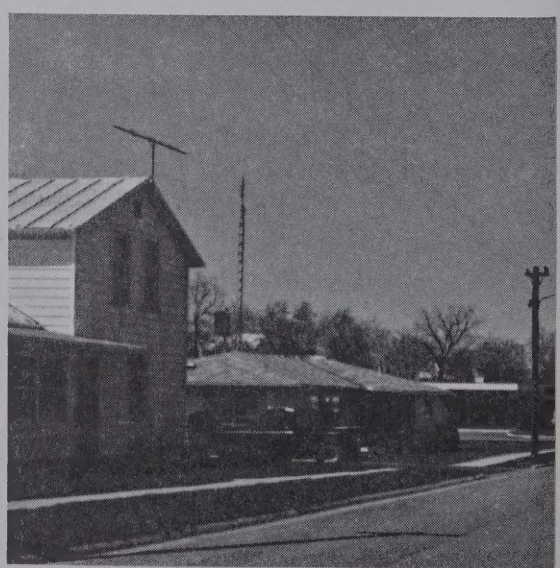
Bottom: Present scene taken at corner of Railroad Street and South Main looking North.



Top: Carl Ueber's house (now where Jim Koons house is on Baum Street). Also shows part of Maternus Blust's brick yard.

Bottom and middle picture on next page: Standing on corner of Auburn St. (East Albion St. and State Road 8) looking down Baum St. Blust Brick and Tile Factory in background, Schlotter's store on right (Koons) St. James Livery Barn on the left, the old Jail and fire house (Harold Gienger's home) and Grandma Stoeckley's house.





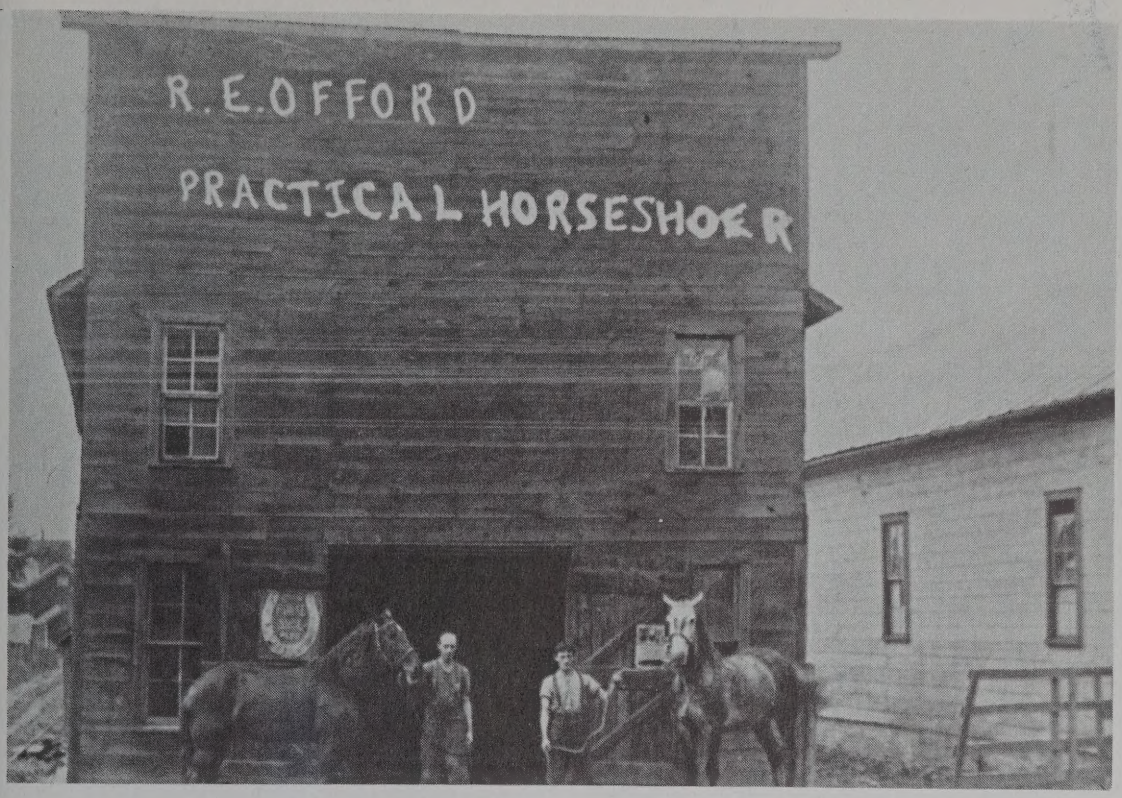
At top: Grandma's Stoeckley's house in late 1890's and early 1900's. Man with her is Herman Vanderbosch. Middle: Looking north on Baun St. Right: Is presently the home of the Lawrence Blust's family, on Baum St.

Top: Shows scene looking down Baum (close up of old jail and livery barn [St. James]).

Bottom: Shows Mr. Gus Schucht's Cigar Factory (once was Peter Haas' who lived in old school [Barry Bolinger - Baum St.]). Mr. Schucht was a Grandfather to Lawrence Blust.

KOONS MARKET

In time, Schlotter's saloon (barber in one corner), and Hanlon's grocery store became Koon's Market, sometime in 1940. Of the five grocery stores in Avilla (Brumbaugh and Sheets, Fisher, and Wolf, Henry Crothers, Knauer Brothers, and Leitch & Sons. Koons Market and Avilla Market (formerly Fisher's Market) are the only two left.



Top: Offord's Blacksmith shop once located where parking lot beside Country Kitchen and Bakery is now. (R.E. Offord with apprentice Elmer Hess shown in picture.)

Bottom: Same blacksmith shop taken after 1915 (sliding door was installed replacing swinging door) (R.E. Offord holding dog, Doc. Boyd [Veterinarian], Peter Dolan [Harness maker], and Herman Lash & Son, Harold).

Country Kitchen and Bakery (owned by the S. Van Asperen family), located at West Albion Street (once was Joe Kraus Tin Shop and later a residence).

Wolf's Tin Shop at present.

Top: Elmer Thrapp Druggist with friend and helper, Paul Weimer. Left: Man with apron is Stewart, Cullahan, Hersh, Thrapp, Kokenge, Hass, and Knauer, are all standing in front of Thrapp's Drug Store now known as Wolf's Tin Shop on East Albion Street.

Home built by Henry W. Leach, private banker, with unearned monies in 1900's. (Located on North Main Street.) Later purchased by Kokenge family (Eventually just Charles and Loretta Kokenge - brother and sister) (Is now owned by Henry and Fayann Seibel and family).

Bottom: B. J's Small Engine Repair owned by the Bill Haynes' (originally was a garage built by Bill Fischer).

AVILLA'S RAILROADS:

The Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railway Company was formed in 1869, by the consolidation of the following four railroads, each of which had previously been formed of two others: Michigan Southern and Northern Indiana, Cleveland & Toledo, Buffalo & Erie and Cleveland, Painesville & Ashtabula. The Michigan Southern was projected in 1837, through the southern part of that State, from Monroe on the east to New Buffalo on the west; but was not continued on to Chicago until 1852. Of the Northern Indiana Railroad, the Chicago *Times,* of 1877, has this to say: "In 1835, John B. Chapman, of Warsaw, Ind., a member of the State Legislature, introduced a bid for the incorporation of the 'Atlantic and Pacific Railroad.' He was ridiculed out of this ambitious title, and finally consented to come down to 'Buffalo and Mississippi Railroad,' but would not yield another mile." Work on the road was begun in 1835; but in 1837 came the financial crash that doomed the railroad to a sleep equal in duration to that of Rip Van Winkle. An effort at resuscitation was made in 1847, culminating, finally, in the road's passing to the Litchfields, under the name of Northern Indiana Railroad. The work went on slowly until at last, in 1855, the Michigan Southern and the Northern Indians were consolidated with a union of those two names. The road was completed through Noble County early in 1858. Under the presidency of the Vanderbilts, the road is paying its stockholders dividends. So far as known, the citizens of the county contributed nothing toward the construction of the road.

The corporation first known as the Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad Company was duly incorporated and organized by articles of association, bearing date January 18, 1854, with power to construct, maintain and operate a railroad from the town of Hartford, in Blackford County, Ind., to a point on the north line of the State, in the direction of Grand Rapids, Mich. Afterward, by various articles of consolidation and incorporation with other roads, it assumed the above corporate name in June, 1857, and at that time had a declared capital stock of $2,800,000, including large tracts of valuable timber land grants in Northern Michigan; but the paid-up capital of the company was so small that it was found impossible to meet the expense of constructing the road, in which case, the land grants, after a certain date, would revert to the Government. To prevent this, various expediencies were resorted to, and at last extension of the time for the completion of certain portions of the road obtained. Work was resumed under several contracts, one of which was with George W. Geisendorff, of Rome City, dated December, 1864, to build and equip fifteen miles of road, understood to be between the latter town and La Grange, Ind.; $19,000 paid by Mr. Geisendorff to the company were expended on the road north of Grand Rapids. Still the company found itself unable to continue the completion of the road, and a new executive administration under the old organization was effected, that some relief might be obtained.

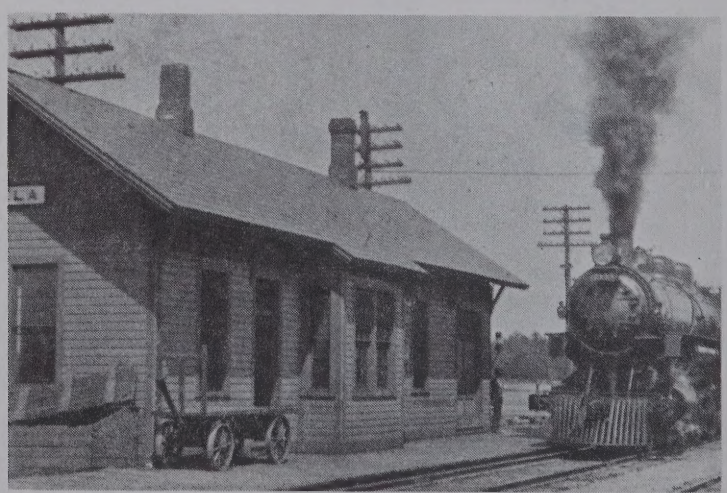
Confidence was partially restored, and the citizens along the road in Noble and La Grange Counties subscribed about $200,000 in aid of the work, the most of which was payable conditionally, and hence was unavailable until the conditions had been complied with. Soon, after considerable difficulty, another extension of time to January 1, 1868, was obtained. The Pittsburgh, Fort Wayne & Chicago Railroad was solicited for help, and furnished it conditionally by indorsing certain stipulations on fifteen hundred $1,000 bonds of the issue of January, 1860. But this seemed to afford only temporary relief, as, in April, 1869, a number of responsible parties living in New York, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, and known as the Continental Improvement Company, obtained such control of the Grand Rapids Company that the completion of the road was rapidly pushed forward, with the aid of a declared capital of $2,000,000, owned by the last-named corporation, until, in December,

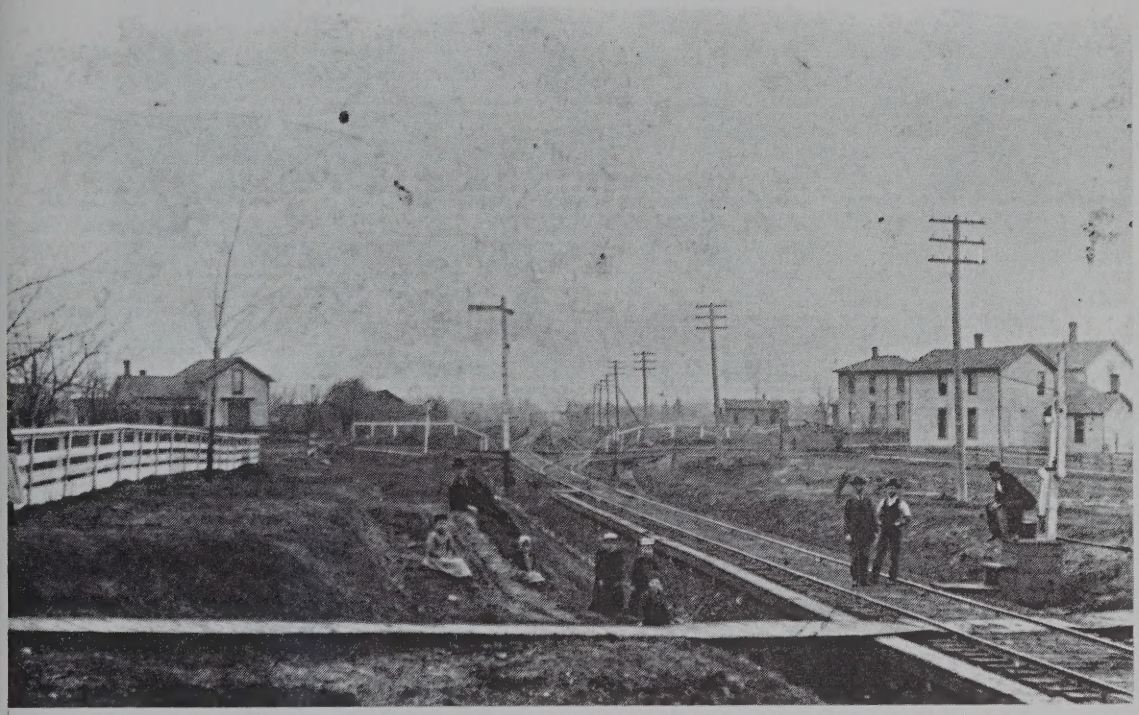
1873, the road, constructed and completed in accordance with the contract, was turned over to the Grand Rapids & Indiana Company. Thus it was, that after a long, distressing struggle for life, the road, at the price of large profits, was placed upon a permanent running basis. It is of incalculable value to La Grange and Noble Counties; although the trade in some localities has been divided, but the counties on the whole have been greatly benefited. Kendallville has been injured in some respects, and benefited in others. Avilla has found a decided improvement.

Early in 1872, the townships Allen, Jefferson, Albion, York and Sparta were called to vote a tax to aid the present Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. Allen refused such aid, although she would undoubtedly receive greater benefit than any of the others. The vote in Jefferson was 187 for, 75 against; the tax amounting to $3,078.60. That in Albion 103 for, none against; tax, $3,380.80. That in York 131 for, 19 against; tax, $2,793.95. That in Sparta 115 for, 25 against; tax, $3,796.15. Total tax voted, $13,049.50. of which $12,322.99 have been paid to the company. The grain buyers at the stations in this road report that, on account of direct transportation to Baltimore, an Eastern sea-board, the other roads not having such direct transportation, a higher price can be paid for grain by them than by buyers on the other roads. Farmers confirm this statement, and govern their sales accordingly.

Top: Shows the Depots at the junction of the B&O Railroad (before it was moved further south) and the G.R.&I. RR. Sign at corner of tower reads: Western Union Telegraph Office. Tower is on east side of G.R.&I., depot is north side of B&O, white building in back is South Feed Mill.

Bottom: The B & O coming in from the east.





Top: Looking west from Van Scoyoc St. at the old B & O RR tracks toward what is now Railroad St. to the far right is where Butch Fisher now lives on corner of Railroad St. and Hwy 3. To the left is Clara McCoy's house.

Bottom: Present scene of above.

Top: Old GR & I depot that used to be behind St. James Restaurant is now Avilla Feed Feed Mill-North.

GRAND RAPIDS & INDIANA

In Effect Sept. 25, '92.

GOING NORTH.

For Grand Rapids..... 3 58 p m
For Grand Rapids and north..... 8 57 a m
For Grand Rapids and North ..... 4 10 a m

GOING SOUTH.

For Fort Wayne and Cincinnati.. 11 40 am
For Fort Wayne..... .....6 19 p
For Fort Wayne and south.....P 53 p m

W. H. WHITNEY, Agent, Avilla.

B. & O. R. R.

Trains Leave Avilla

GOING EAST.

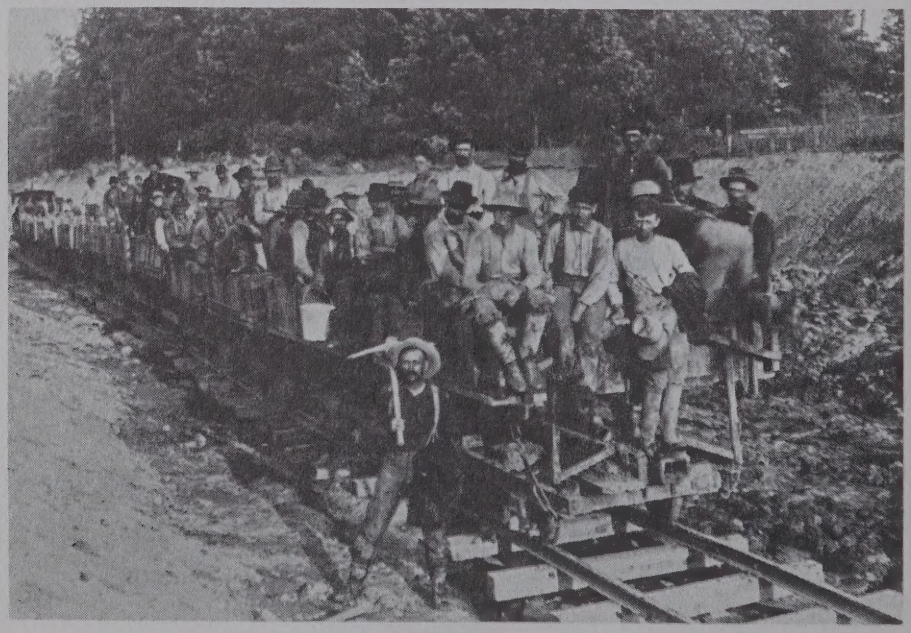
No.10,.....11:44 a. m.
" 14.....11:29 pm
" 32—Local.....3:25 p. m.

GOING WEST.

No. 3..... .... 1:45 a m
" 9,.....12:59 p.m.
" 33—Local.....6:55 a.m.

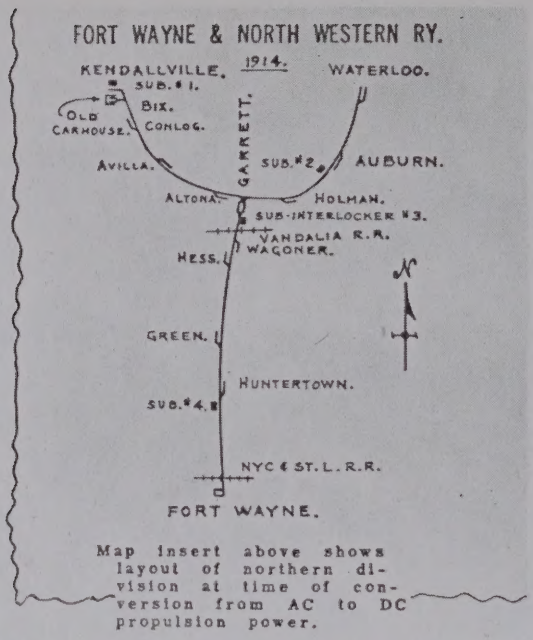
W. P. ALLMAN, Agent, Avilla.

Bottom: Crew working on B&O Railroad - Frank Stoeckley w/pick.



Avilla Depot for G.R.&I. located behind St. James.

Swan Depot for G.R.&I. Railroad.



Map insert above shows layout of northern division at time of conversion from AC to DC propulsion power.

Toledo & Chicago Interurban

Ft. Wayne-Lafayette-Bluffton:

A network of interurban railways out of Fort Wayne was inspired by the success of city lines in that city. First came an interurban between Peru and Wabash, followed by an additional line pracctically every year as new companies built connecting routes. Consolidation into one important company came with the formation of the Fort Wayne & Wabash Valley Traction Company. Thru running arrangements worked out with the Union Traction Company provided Indianapolis - Fort Wayne service via both Bluffton (125 miles) and via Peru (135 miles). Luxurious wooden equipment, some with buffet service, was acquired for these runs.

A tragic headon collision at Kingsland in 1910 led to reorganization as the Ft. Wayne & Northern Indiana Traction Company in 1911. Expansion of the utility end of the business led to another reorganization in 1920 as the Indiana Service Corporation. Another serious wreck in this period hastened the development of designs for steel equipment and also resulted in rebuilding of the better wooden cars. The company's shops and its capable mechanical staff were noted for their excellence and produced several outstanding designs culminating in the luxurious Wabash Valley Flyer cars.

The route from Ft. Wayne to Lafayette paralleled the Wabash River and for part of the distance it was built on what had been the towpath of the Wabash & Erie Canal, an extremely winding way. The operating timetable listed no less than 17 areas of the Peru-Ft. Wayne segment where speed was restricted severely by curvature and between curves there was rarely more than a few hundred feet of tangent track.

The unusual Y-shaped route extending northward from Ft. Wayne to Kendallville and Waterloo was built as the Toledo & Chocago Interurban Railway. This confusing name seems to have been inspired by its promoters' plan to link it with other proposed routes to form a branch connecting Ft. Wayne with a Toledo- Chicago main line. There grandiose plans led to adoption of the 3300 v AC trolley system which would be suitable for transmission of power at low cost over long distances. However, as in the case of the neighboring Ft. Wayne & Springfield Railway, since the cars had to run over the street railway lines to reach downtown Ft. Wayne, it was necessary to equip them with all the control devices necessary to the 600 v DC trolley

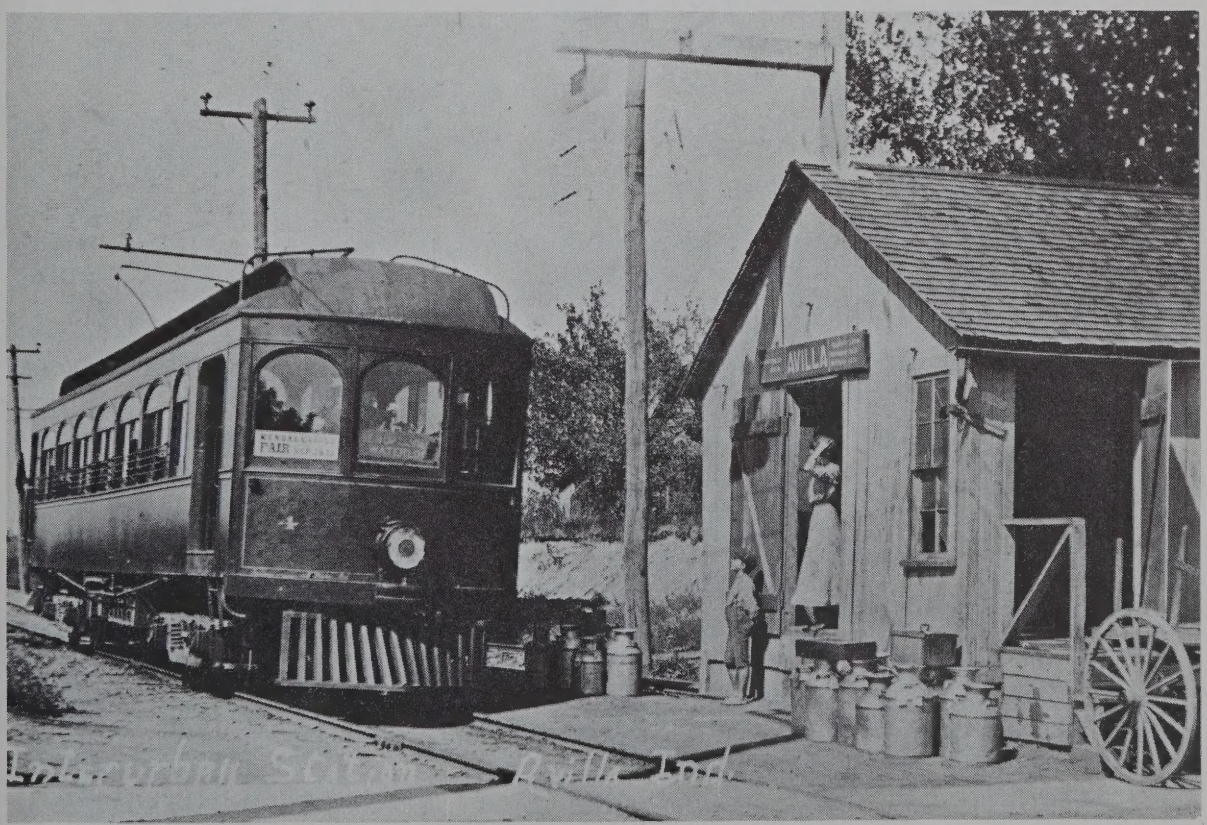
system as well as those for 3300 v AC, and this resulted in a complex, heavy, slow car.

The company was reorganized in 1912 under the more realistic, yet still optimistic, name of Ft. Wayne & Northwestern Railway and in November 1913 the 3300 v system was replaced with conventional 600 v DC. New motors and controls were applied to the old cars with a very substantial reduction in weight and in operating costs, but not before a lot of structural weakening had occured in the old bodies. In the next few years the line came under the control of the Indiana Service Corporation and a new lightweight car design was developed. Ten were ordered from St. Louis Car Company, six were placed on the Ft. Wayne Van Wert & Lima Traction and the remaining four were assigned to the Waterloo-Kendallville line in 1924. Although built for two-man operation, they were easily revamped for one-man service, which began on August 3, 1928. Pilot model for this conversion was car 327, not actually one of the ISC steels, but a rebuild of the former Ft. Wayne & Decatur #103.

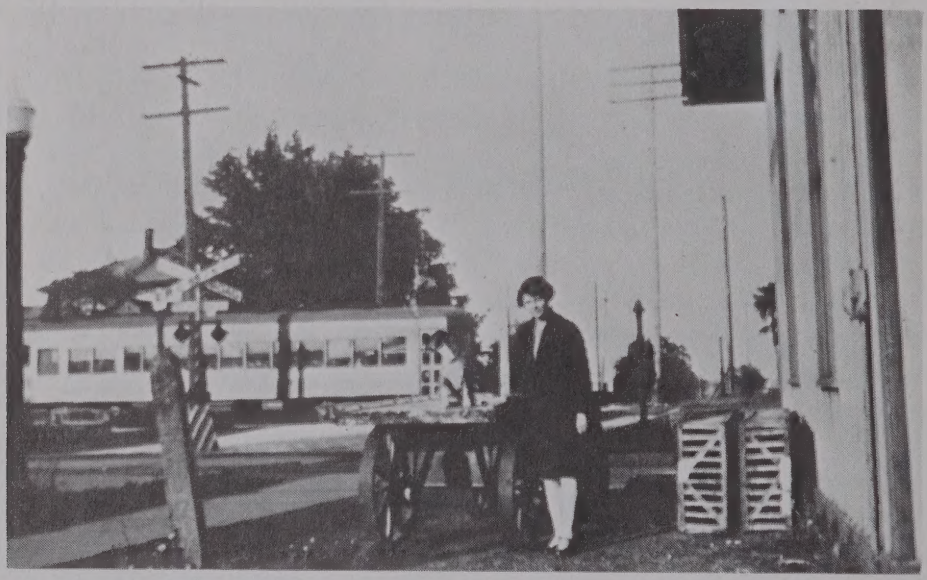
Indiana Service Corporation exerted operating management, either directly or indirectly, over the Ft. Wayne & Decatur Traction Co., the Fort Wayne-Lima Railroad and (in the 1930s) the Marion & Bluffton Traction Company. ISC's system of interurban lines was leased to Indiana Railroad in July 1930.

INTERURBAN RAILWAY

Picture shows car w/Kendallville Fair, September 18-22, 1912, advertised. Sign above station door reads: Avilla, Waterloo, Kendallville, Ft. Wayne.



Picture shows the little station for the Interurban. (People not known.) Located on east side of tracks on past where Paul Bolinger now lives (East Albion St.).



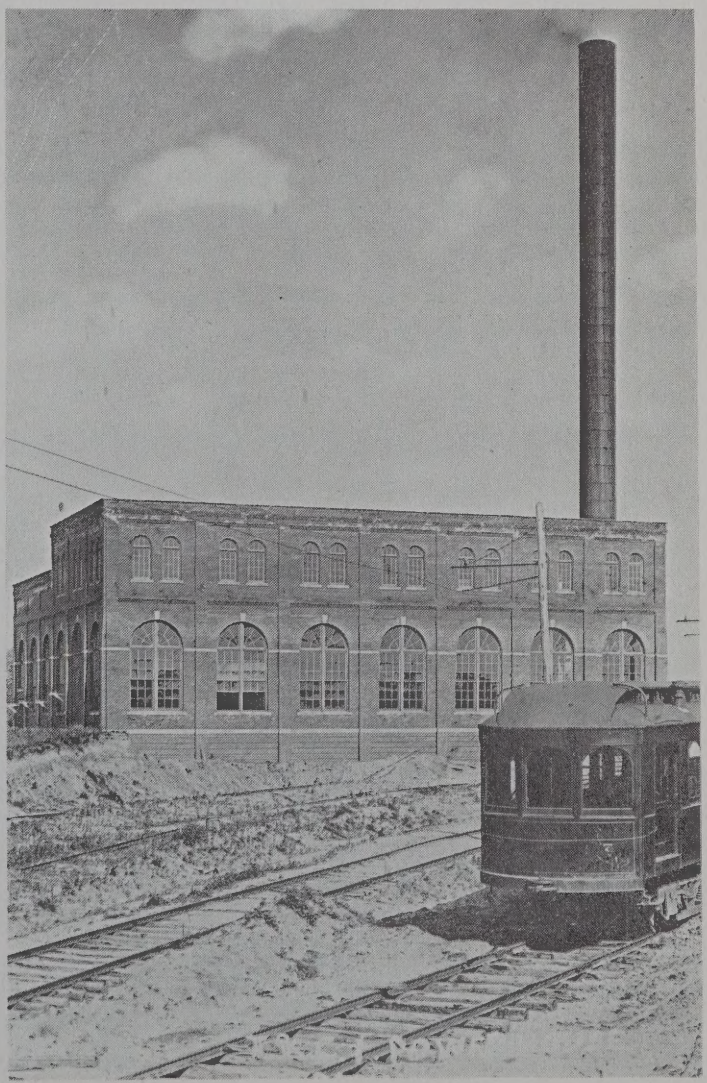
Interurban Car: Shown is Alma Ott (Weimer) Standing at RR Depot.

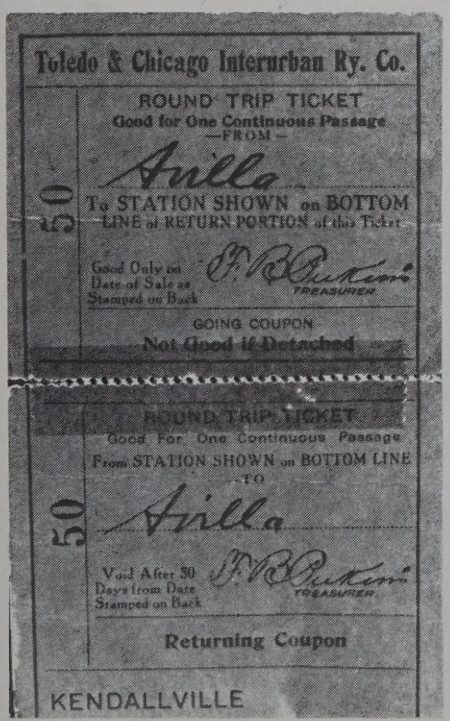
Excursion to Robison Park (1907)

Top: One part of "Y" of route is Kendalville

Right: Power house for Interurban at Kendallville.

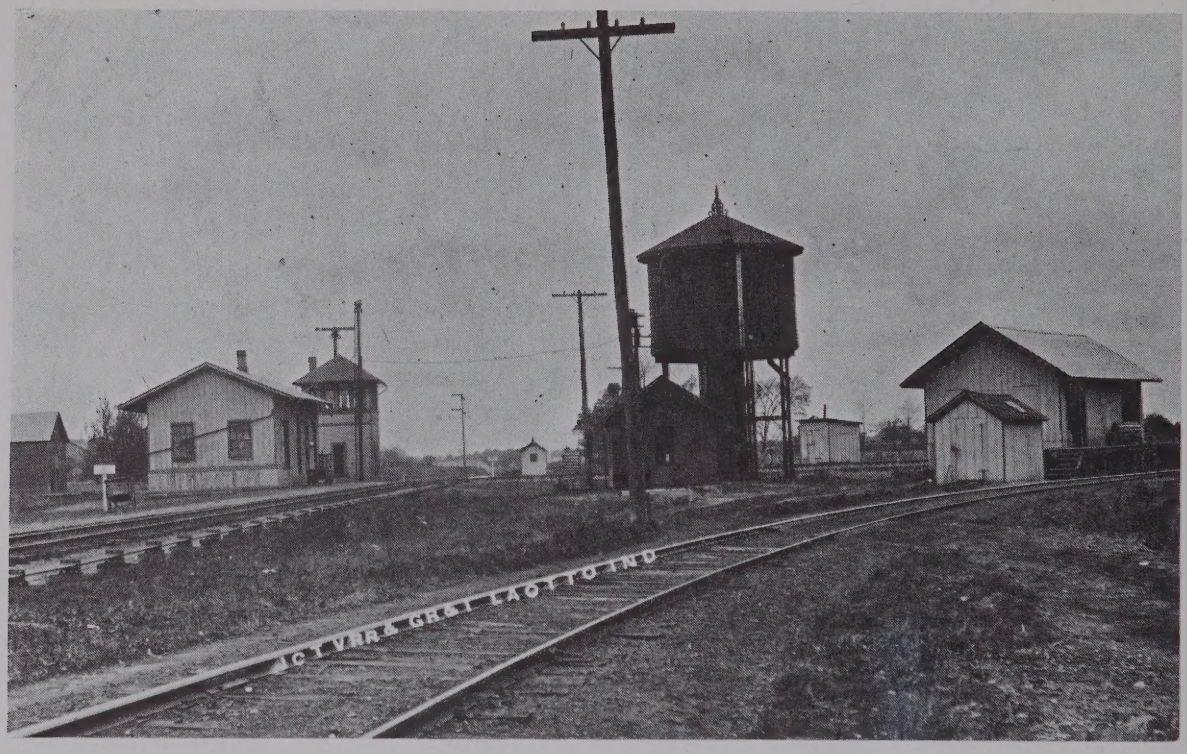
Bottom: First ticket purchased for round trip to Kendallville Sept. 25, 1906 by Frank Stoechley.




Toledo & Chicago Interurban Ry. Co.

ROUND TRIP TICKET
Good for One Continuous Passage
—FROM—
Avilla
To STATION SHOWN on BOTTOM LINE of RETURN PORTION of this Ticket
50
Good Only on Date of Sale as Stamped on Back
F. B. Burtsell TREASURER
GOING COUPON
Not Good if Detached

ROUND TRIP TICKET
Good For One Continuous Passage
From STATION SHOWN on BOTTOM LINE
TO
Avilla
50
Void After 30 Days from Date Stamped on Back
F. B. Burtsell TREASURER
Returning Coupon
KENDALLVILLE



Top: Junction at LaOtto Railroads: G.R. & I. and V.R.R. (Taken around 1910 & shows "Y" where trains could be turned around). (V. R.R. - Vandalia Railroad, G.R. & I. Grand Rapids & Indiana Railroad).

Bottom: Looking South in LaOtto (once called Grand Rapids Crossing and Simonville was named LaOtto by Rev. B.F. Stultz in 1875).

Early Life in this Vicinity—An Interesting Letter From Robert S. Haines

Editor News:—In response to your request I for one will give a sketch of my early life in Avilla. In 1842, when I was 7½ years old, my parents moved from Pennsylvania in a one-horse wagon, and passed through Avilla on a "one-track" road, through trees and brush about where J. D. Sheaffer's mill now stands. There was no timber cut between Swan and John Geiser's farm, now owned by J.W. Heckman. On this farm was a small empty log cabin, of which we took possession about dark. For several nights we slept on the flour, then on pole bedsteads for about six weeks, until father could build a cabin about where the residence of J.P. Haines.

The winter of 1842-43 was the long cold winter so much talked of. This same winter father had one cow and some hogs. He ran out of feed, and to save the stock father cut trees for them to browse. The hogs and cattle would eat the brush — maple, basswood and elm were the best—and deer would come to browse also. One morning as father arose he saw a large deer browsing at a tree top. He got his gun, made a crack in the door and shot it; it ran about ten rods and fell dead. Our neighbors in 1842 were F.J. Borck, Samuel Weimer, Peter Weimer, Evan Jones, C. Diehm and N.I. Hill, who resided where B. Shanaline now lives, west of town.

The first trees cut in Avilla was in about 1844, which was to clear off the corner just west of S.K. Randall's store for a log schoolhouse, and Dr. Thomas was the first teacher. The first residence built in Avilla was a sort of a cabin and frame built by N. I. Hill. The second was the present Dolan House, also built by Mr. Hill between 1846 and 1848. About this time father "worked out" for 50¢ per day, and I, at 10 years old, worked for Evan Jones at 12½¢ per day, and took my pay in flour! The largest flock of deer I remember having seen was nine, which passed through our fields about this time. Father shot at one, but could not find that he hit it. A little later my father and I went to Fort Wayne to mill with an ox-team, and were gone three days and two nights.

In those days religious services were all held in dwelling houses. The Catholics met for worship at the homes of F.J. Borck and John Geiser; the German Lutherans held services at Samuel Weimer's and C. Diehm's houses. The first church erected was the German Lutheran, built as a log cabin. The second was the Catholic, a frame building which is still standing, and is now known as St. Mary's hall.

But I have just thought of another deer story. I believe it is generally known that the deer is one of the wildest of animals. While boys we would dig ginsing, dry it and sell it for 25¢ a pound. (It is now worth $2 a lb.) One late spring day my brothers and I were digging ginsing in the woods now owned by John Bauhaus, Jr., and scared up an old deer. Near by we found a fawn. We took it out to the road and set it down. It became very tame, ran after us blatting, followed us home and made a nice pet.

For several years we got our mail at Swan. On letters coming from Pennsylvania unpaid the postage would be 25¢ on each letter. About the year 1845 my father, S.P. Haines, Judge Edwin Randall, F.J. Borck, Peter Weimer and N.I. Hill held a meeting, organized a post office and named it "Avilla." N.E. Hill was the first postmaster, S. M. Kline was second, Henry Baum third, J.A. Hudson fourth, Mrs. Eliza Swarthout fifth, S.P. Stewart sixth, Aug. Vogeding seventh, J.L. Henry eighth.

The Indians had all gone about a year before we arrived here. For several years Kendallville was unnamed and unknown. Lisbon was the best known town in the county, and Rochester, a mile east of Ligonier, was second. The county seat was at Port Mitchell and Augusta before it was located at Albion.

When in 1842 father built his cabin, to make sure of getting it on his own land he set it about twenty-five rods from the supposed line. He laid the foundation on a

cloudy day, missed his reckonings and thus get his cabin set quartering to the southeast instead of to the south.

In 1847 with the help of some interested neighbors, father was induced to build a water-power sawmill on land now owned by Fred Borck. We found it very difficult to make and maintain the dam. Being made of clay, it would often break out. Father ran this mill about eight years and then sold it to myself and elder brother. Three years later my brother died, and I then continued the business about four years alone. We always had more sawing than we could do, as the mill run only in wet weather. Walnut lumber then sold for $8 to $10 per thousand; poplar, etc. at $6. From all the land we cleared for eight to ten years we used the best timber for rails. The balance (walnut, poplar and other good timber) we rolled in heaps and burned.

A word about wolves. While Michael Diehm was hunting cattle in the woods about one-half mile from A.A. VanGorder's he heard wolves howling. He mocked them, found they were coming closer, and Mr. Diehm climbed a tree. The wolves came right to the tree and tried to get at him. He had a gun, but I do not remember why he did not shoot any. Peter Diehm is his brother, Mrs. Hess his sister and George Diehm his son. Perhaps they can explain it better than I. Wolves generally leave their young in hollow logs. At that time there was a bounty of $5 on each scalp, so there were regular wolf hunters. The old she-wolf generally leaves her young early in the morning; then toward evening she howis so loud as to be easily heard three miles. It is a very doteful noise—enough to make one's hair stand up. The young all begin like a lot of pups to answer her, and in this way expose themselves to the hunters. There was a nest of them in the creek bottom north of A. A. VanGorder's; hunters exterminated them. Rufus Roth then lived on what is now the farm of Peter Barkes, and as he stepped on a large hollow log one day an old she-wolf ran out of it. Roth assisted by his neighbor, Gilbert Sherman, there secured five young wolves. Mr. Roth had been two poor to pay his taxes, but these scalps brought him $25.

Deer hunting was very common. The deer would pasture in the green wheat fields in the fall. One moonlight evening my uncle T.J. Smith climbed a tree on the farm now owned by J.S. Hooper, near the cemetery, and drew his gun up after him with a rope. The deer soon came and from his position in the tree Mr. Smith began firing at them. Strangely for deer they did not scare. He shot until his bullets were gone, and then shot away the ramrod. Descending to the ground he discovered three deer lying in the field. Two he had killed with bullets and one with the ramrod.

We were in this country about ten years before the L.S. & M.S. railroad was built through Sturgis. The grain and seed grown and the flour made on the prairie country and rich lands north, northeast and northwest was almost all teamed through here to Fort Wayne, from whence it was shipped on the Wabash canal. There was a string of teams on the road almost constantly loaded with grain and flour. It was not uncommon for fifteen or twenty teams to put up for the night at our Avilla hotel for back loads. These teams would haul salt and goods of all kinds for merchants at Lisbon, Kendallville, Tamarack, Wright's Corners, Union Mills and Mongo, LaGrange, Ontario, Lima, Sturgis and other small places. *R.S. Haines. Avilla, March 20, 1893.*

Lived Here Long Ago (March 30, 1893)

Men Who Made Early Avilla—A Stage Line Incident

Editor News:—I first saw Avilla—or, as it often called "Hill's Corners,"—in the latter part of November, 1856, when I arrived on the old stage coach from Sturgis, Mich. I do not remember where we first struck the plank road north, but the old plank road through Avilla was considered the greatest enterprise of the day. My brother-in-law, Thomas Southworth, was living one mile north of Avilla, and to his house I went. There were few people living in Avilla then. The firm of Baum &

Walter — later Baum, Walter & Haines—kept a general store on the corner north of the tavern. Mr. Baum's dwelling was also here. The hotel on the opposite corner was called Hill's Tavern, but it was rented to Samuel M. Kline. The postoffice was kept in the bar-room. N.I. Hill, a justice of the peace, lived in a small house just south of the hotel. H.J. Tennant lived a little farther south on the west side of the road. He owned a farm and I think it was rented to a Mr. Secor. Joel Isbell ran a blacksmith shop, and there was also a shoe shop in town, but I don't remember the shoemaker's name. Jacob Haines lived on the west side of the street. A doctor named Shearer was also here, but I don't think he ever hung out a shingle. A man named Horner ran the hotel after Sam Kline. Those were great times—free whisky and "wild-cat" money. Jeff Smith living north of Baum & Walter's store, was running an ashery there. A Mr. Walters, father of the merchant, was a wagon-maker. Then there were David and Moses Walter who went to the army, and I never heard of them after. The elder Mr. Carver lived a little east of the hotel, and Evan Jones still further east. I went to work for Mr. Jones in the summer of 1857 for $12 per month. Others I remember were a Mr. Harding, a carpenter, Mr. Shaddow and Mr. Weimer. If I were there I could point out the location of all the old log houses along that plank road. The old Catholic church, a frame building, stood on the east side of the road. Beside it a cross was raised. I was present at this ceremony, but could not read the inscription upon the cross. A little farther north on the hill on the west side of the road was another hotel kept by a man named Abnett. *Wm. Askew. Saunemin, Ill, March 23.*

Mail Service—The First Thresher—Deer Story—Hunting Squirrels With Clubs—A Good Letter.

Editor News:—Our mail service has undergone considerable change since 1844, when we would have mail carried through Avilla about once or twice a week—and that was very uncertain. Among the first mail carriers were Mason Bowen and William Browand of Kendallville, Corydon Warner, of Swan. Later the mail was carried by stage or hack until the G.R. & I. R.R. was completed.

Among the first mechanics in this section were John Geiser, blacksmith; S.P. Haines, carpenter, F.J. Borck, tanner; Fred Forshey, shoemaker; and Joseph Bender, cooper. But these trades, useful as they are, were of little value to the possessors, as the building of log cabins occupied their attention. Our fathers were called to log cabin raisings for ten miles around. I have gone four miles, myself, to such "raisings."

The first church built in this vicinity, mentioned by Mr. R.S. Haines, stood on Samuel Weimer's land, right in the woods across the road from the present Catholic school house.

I call to memory my boyhood days of 1844, 1845, etc., regarding threshing grain. I have driven oxen day after day tramping out grain until Mr. Edwin Randall and Mr. Bronson brought the first thresher to this country. It was a common eight-horse power, the machine attached to it being a frame about four feet square, with a cylinder inside and a piece of canvas or sheepskin hanging to the front so the grains of wheat would not put our eyes out as we separated the straw from the wheat. I have also reaped wheat with a sickle many a day, and can show my old sickle yet—also the scars I cut on my hands with it. What a decided improvement since then. Time will bring roses, but first must come buds.

About the year 1841 my uncle, Peter Weimer, went hunting one mile northwest of Avilla and shot a big deer. He threw down his gun, jumped astride the deer to cut its throat, whereupon the deer jumped up and ran away with Uncle Peter, finally throwing him off and hurting him considerably. About a month later my father shot the same deer, and on close examination found that Uncle Peter had on the former

occasion shot a prong off one of the antlers, and the shock had caused the animal to fall. I have the antlers yet.

Now a little something for the boys: When I was a lad about ten years old, J.W. Haines and I were chums, and we would go squirrel hunting with clubs. One of us would stand in a fence corner near the woods with a club while the other would drive the squirrels out of the cornfield. Then the fun would begin, pounding and threshing right and left until both were exhausted.

Now they tole me a thorough excitement to bring on a good perspiration would break up the ague, so I tried it on. I began chasing squirrel's from 9 o'clock to 12, when I had eight squirrels and no more shake for years. All the weapon I used was an ox-gad and plenty of perspiration.

I will remember the raising of the mission cross at St. Mary's church, as I was then 20 years of age. The inscription on the cross, translated into English, was "Whosoever, shall persevere to the end shall be saved." About thirty years ago I was in Missouri, and near Tipton, that state, I found a similar mission cross, bearing the same inscription as this. Further particulars later. *F.J. Borck, May 4, 1893.*

Francis J. Borck

The announcement in the last issue of the News regarding the death of Francis J. Borck was in error regarding his age. Mr. Borck was among the earliest settlers in this vicinity, and the following from his son will be read with interest:

Francis J. Borck was born in Ahenheim, Prussia, May 10, 1810 and died March 29, 1893, aged 82 years, 10 months, 19 days. He emigrated to this country in 1833, arriving in Seneca county, Ohio, Nov. 20. He came to Indiana with Daniel Bixler, landing at Kendallville August 25, 1836. For a home he cleared sixty acres of land extending from Main St. to the lake. While living with Mr. Bixler he became acquainted with Miss Anna Margrete Weimer, whom he later married. Miss Weimer came to America with her parents in 1832, landing in Baltimore, Md., and came to Avilla April 6, 1835. Mr. Weimer entered a piece of land, 160 acres, adjoining Avilla on the north. Now talk about the trials of man—here is a case to try anybody: When Samuel Weimer (my mother's father) received his deeds his land was pointed out to him, and he located on what is now John Bauhaus jr's. place, cleared a farm and built a log cabin and a barnupon it. Then came the news that he was not on his own land. So he had to quit this farm and seek another. They pointed out to him the land on which John Heckman Jr. now lives as his, and upon this Mr. Weimer built another log cabin and began clearing the farm. Quite a piece of land had been cleared when he was again notified that he was on the wrong farm! Now came the hour of trial; hard labor gone, poverty and despair stared them in the face. But Mr. Weimer plucked up courage, found his own land at last, and went sturdily to work building his third log cabin and improving his third farm. From this time prosperity smiled on them. There were three children in the family—Peter, Mary M., and Anna M., and each was given a portion of their father's land.

"But we must now turn back to Frank Borck, as he was better known. He first entered a piece of land east of Kendallville; this he traded for the farm on which Ignatius Meyer now lives; then he rented Wm. Mitchell's farm. On Nov. 12, 1837, he married Anna M. Weimer in Ft. Wayne. Times were hard and pluck and grit were required. They moved into what was called the Henderson house. It stood near the present union depot, but a little west, on the banks of Henderson Lake, Kendallville. Father farmed in Kendallville from the fall of 1837 until the spring of 1841, when they moved to Avilla, purchasing the second log cabin built by Samuel Weimer, on the Heckman farm. This log cabin he moved upon the present farm of Ignatius Meyer. Here they lived until 1863, when they returned to Kendallville. While living

there father built a portion of what is now the Flint & Walling plant. In 1866 they moved to Maumee, Lucas county, Ohio, where they lived until they died. Anna M. Borck died May 13, 1874, and Francis J. on March 29, 1893. To them were born ten children, seven of whom are yet living. *F.J. Borck, April 13, 1893.*

Editor News—Avilla, with eight mails a day, now enjoys a somewhat improved mail service from that of the old stage line days. At that time our mail delivery was mixed with a degree of uncertainty that kept us guessing. I remember on January 1, 1855, we were particularly anxious to get mail, and a crowd of us had gathered at the tavern to await the arrival of the stage. Soon it was seen approaching from the north in charge of "Stagedriver John," as he was called, with four horses on the dead run. Through town the stage went without slacking its pace, and through Swan as well, never stopping until Huntertown was reached. We had no mail that day, and passengers who expected to eat New Years dinner in Avilla were carried to Huntertown. Stagedriver John had been ushering in the new year with liberal potations of Kendallville whisky, and for this freak he was discharged. It was not long, however, until he was back in his old position, as he was one of the best drivers on the route. *P.L. Crawford., Avilla, March 22, 1893.*

Old Avilla business district about 1910

According to Mr. R.W. Offord (one time Avilla resident and now of Chula Vista, Calif.), the business district as he remembered it in 1909 and 1910 goes like this:

Starting at the east end of Albion Street on the north side, were at that time, two houses and then the Inter-urban Depot which is now gone. On the west side of the G.R. & I. Railroad, or Conrail now, was the Haines bouse and the stock yards were behind it. Next was the Bill Lash house with a jewelry store in front run by Bill Knox. Knox sold to Carl Minick.

Bill Stewart's building, where he assembled buggies for sale, was next. This was later converted into a grocery store by Henry Halon. Then came Gus Shooks cigar factory and tobacco store, Charles Schlotter's saloon which is now Koons' Market. The house on the northwest corner was the home of Joe and Mandy Tarleton.

Still on the north side of Albion Street we came to the Brick Block consisted of Cap Clark's butcher shop, Joe Deuitch's saloon, John Shuttleworth's drygoods and grocery store and Dr. Veasey's medical office was upstairs. A tinshop, which was converted into a cafe by the Stephenson brothers was next, but is now gone. (the parking lot west of The Avilla Tap).

West of the alley, now the Avilla Hardware, was the general store of S.K. Randall. Next to Randall was the Elmer Thrapp home. Mr. Offord recalls the Methodist Church used to hold ice cream and strawberry socials on the lawn under the pine trees and would borrow Pilgrim's and Mr. Offord's father's kerosene flare torches for lights. The band wagon would be parked on the corner for the Saturday night concert.

Across Main Street, where the Standard Station was located, was the three story Shafer Flour Mill. Mr. Offord says, "It had just ceased to operate about the time Dad came to Avilla in 1907 to start his shop. Just west of the mill was the mill maintenance shops."

Next, going west, was the Music Hall or the Opera House. Offord's blacksmith shop (father of R.W. Offord) was on the east side of the alley and there wasn't anything between it and the Eley farm house until five or six years later when Joe Kraus built his tin shop on the west side of the alley. That building was moved just east of the alley and is now the Country Kitchen.

Crossing the street was the Lutheran Church, still there and on the corner (DeLucenay's) was "Pat" Stewart's grocery and hardware store.

On the east side of Main Street was the Dolan house (the old bank building). The Dolan House was moved about 1911, part of it to the south end of town and the main part two blocks west of the old water tower. Next to the Dolan House was John DeCamp's drygoods and grocery which was also the post office then. Also gone was Doc Pepple's barber shop (next to the alley).

Then came Elmer Thrapp's Drugstore (Wolf Tin Shop) and the spot where the post office now stands had no building as yet. Next to the drugstore was Bill Stewart's restaurant and ice cream parlor, Dr. Maloney's medical office, now gone and Henry Hanlon's grocery store, now Shorty's Barber Shop.

Across the street was the St. James Hotel, at that time run by a family named Uebers. They sold to Bob Platt and moved to Garrett to operate the hotel there. Then came the G.R. & I. Depot. East of the railroad and Inter-urban tracks were four houses, to the town limits.

South behind the Dolan House on Main Street was the Dolan Harness Shop. It was moved at the same time as the Dolan House, about a mile west of town.

Then Dave Shanline's barbar shop, when the building was built on the corner. Dave built the building that is now the post office which he operated as a barber shop and Mrs. Shanline ran an ice cream parlor in the rear room for a while.

The Carver Block contained the Avilla Bank run by Saul Baum with the Masonic Lodge rooms upstairs in the north half. Dommie Ueber's saloon was in the south half. Next came Coy Macklin's paint shop.

Next was the Henney's Livery Barn, the Star Cafe, Crother's grocery store, then a furniture store run by Harvey Moore. When the furniture store was moved to the east half of the new block on the corner, this building became the Movie House. These were all destroyed in the livery barn fire in 1915.

On the southwest corner of Main Street, where the fire station is now located, was the Pilgrim Brother's blacksmith shop. North from Pilgrims, the house on the corner was moved about two blocks west, to make room for Dr. Veasey's home, now Brazzell Funeral Home Then the telephone office, George Knauer's house a vacant lot and then the small building that housed The Avilla News. Ed Hooper ran the Avilla News. "Hooper covered Avilla like a blanket in that wheelchair of his. You could hardly sneeze without getting into the News," says Mr. Offord.

Still going north was a store run by people named Straus, a bicycle sh op operated by Bass Munger was in the rear part of the building. Then came Pat Stewart's vacant lot where he assembled farm equipment, his two-story brick house and then back to his store on the corner. Two blocks west and a block south, about where Paul VanGorder lives, was the creamery which closed about 1912 to 1915.

In the south end of town on VanScoyoc Street was Grobis's grist mill, which is now the south mill of the Avilla Feed Mills. Further south was the hay barn as they used to ship baled hay from Avilla, and the Avilla lumber yard (now Toy Co.).

About half way between the lumber yard and the B. & O. Railroad was the south end stock yards. Charley Hilkert and Chris Simons dad shipped cattle from there.

The B. & O. also built bunk houses, a dining room and commissary for their track laborers when they were double tracking the railroad. The B. & O. Railroad Depot, the interlocking tower and the B. & O. Freight Depot are gone now.

At the north end of Baum Street was Blust Brick yard and some of the buildings were still standing around 1910.

Behind Joe and Mandy Tarlton's house (East Albion and Baum) was the Hotel livery barn and next to it was a small building that housed the two hose-reel carts of the Volunteer Fire Department. Behind it, on a frame work, was a large iron ring with an iron bar on a chain which was the alarm system before they got the bell that hung in the old water tower. On Washington Street the town built a building to be the town hall, fire house and two-cell jail. Across the street was the water works and

electric light plant.

At that time there were six ice houses in Avilla and when the ice was thick enough it was cut from Randall's. Heckman's and Davis pond, also King's Lake.

There were no pavements, just brick walks, some concrete walks, some board walks, cinder walks and just plain dirt paths then. The last board walk was taken up in the summer of 1926, located on West Albion Street.

Records are valuable, especially in later years. Many of us take for granted names of people in pictures, locations of building and never date or name them.

Harry Sheets from Auburn sent to Joan Geinger a letter he found written by someone (they forgot to sign their name) about the history of Avilla.

The letter:

This was 1850 and 60. In the years that are swallowed up on the past there stood where the bank building is, a two story frame house owned by a man named Hill and known as "Hills Tavern," also the crossroads was known as Hills Corners.

In the course of time, Patterson Steward put up a building on the southwest corner (Now DeLucenay, I guess) and opened a grocery. Later he built a house, part brick and part frame where he and his wife lived and settlers came. Susan opened a millinery and dress making business.

Then came Solomon Baum and built the house now occupied by Mrs. Anna Thrapp. Now Robert Shurek. Mike Walters built the brick house south of the Lutheran Church on the hill and Baum and Walters built the brick building occupied by Boszor and Kellem as a hardware store and put in a stock of dry goods, known as Baum and Walters. On the northwest corner a man by the name of Shaffer built a grist mill.

A family lived in the country east of the corners named Barr. They had a son Robert who graduated from law school, came home and opened an office at The Corners. He was joined by a fellow lawyer named Wier Carver. Carver married Barr's sister Libbie and built the brick house east of the GR&I tracks. He then put up the building Wolf's grocery now occupies, known as The Carver Block. The second Story was used as a Masonic Temple and club room. Frank Williams lived in the country but, as Justice of the Peace, spent much time at The Corners.

The people living at The Corners began thinking of giving the settlement a name. Early in 1870 the old-timers met at the tavern. Someone suggested Hill Town. This was passed up. Then it was suggested they just call it A Village. This also met with disapproval. Someone said let us call it Avilla, they decided on this name. I know because I was born June of this year, being the first child born in the vicinity after the town was named. Baum and Walters suggested to my father I be named after the town, not the town after me as some think.

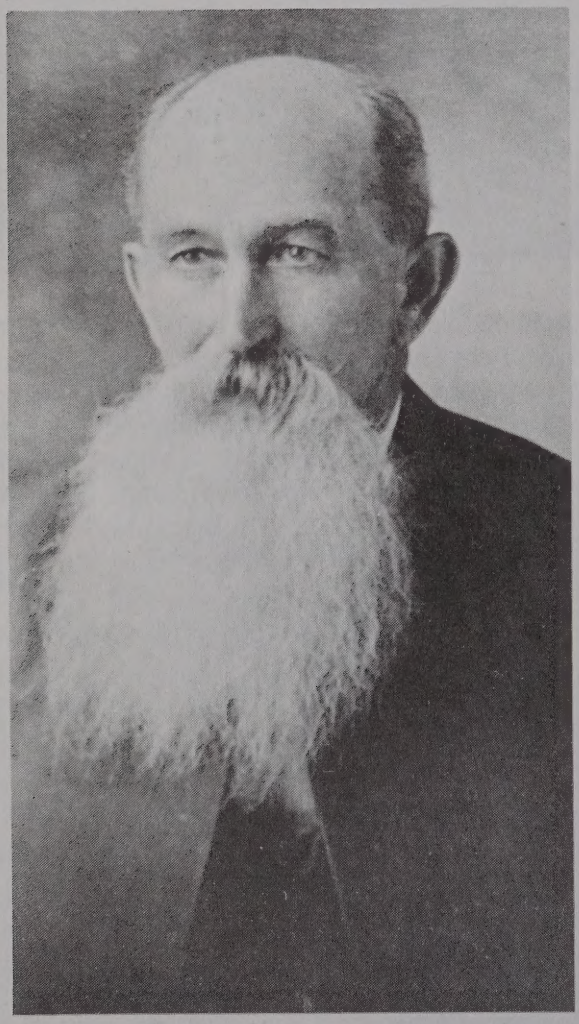
Well it was now a town and must have a post office. A widow lady by name Swartout, not certain of her first name, was appointed. She lived in a small one story house where the Bosor house now stands, and used one room for the post office. She also had a daughter, Mary Jane. (It is believed Avilla Williams, daughter of Frank Williams, wrote this.) *Thursday, March 4, 1977 The Avilla News.*

Shearer/Pilgrim Family: Bottom: Harold Pilgrim (child), Edwin Rainier (c), Lucile Pilgrim (c), Next Row: Glen Pilgrim (c), Harriett Shearer Pilgrim, "Mattie" Martha Shearer (Rainier), Letitia, High Shearer (Glenn's Grandmother), Harry Bruce (c), Salomon Shearer, a Bruce boy, Next Row: George Pilgrim (c), Harry Bruce (c), Next Row: Theron Pilgrim, Charles Rainier, Arthur Rainier (baby in arms), Icy Shearer (wife of Albert), Howard Bruce, Sadie (Sarah) Shearer-Bruce, Back Row: Cleon Pilgrim, Albert Shearer and Fred Shearer.

Back Row: Lotta Veazy, Bertha Shonline, Principal Enos Porter, Mabel Van Gorder, Jennie Faux (Halferty), First Row: Ruth Yeiser (Plaid dress) Lesta Henney Neal became one of Avilla's School teachers) and Marjorie Kenney.

Top: From our right to left: (Front to back) Lutie Stahl, Fern Hines, Minnie Crothers, Gladys Hersh, Edith Hudson, Ruth Hudson, Hazel Yeiser. Fern Dolan (back), Lottie Veasey, Stacia Hass, Jess Macklin (Mrs. Everett Padgitt) Floss Macklin, Clara DeCamp, Mildred Miller, Madge Stewart, Leila Veagey, and Bertha Hart (Taken at a Methodist Evengelic Church picnic). Middle: Taken in front of Libby Stewart's home (now is Bill Davenport's home on Main Street) Left to right: (Libby Stewart, Lesta Henny, Meta Stewart, and Ella Henney. Bottom: Taken at Stacia Haas home (now Barry Bolinger home) at back is Walter Crothers, Glen Thrapp, Milale, Zoe Stewart, Welcome Krieger, Fern Dolan, Jennie Stillhorn - Front: Merly Henney, Minnie Crothers (Pepple) Lee Allmon, Stacia Hass and Lawrence Helmer.

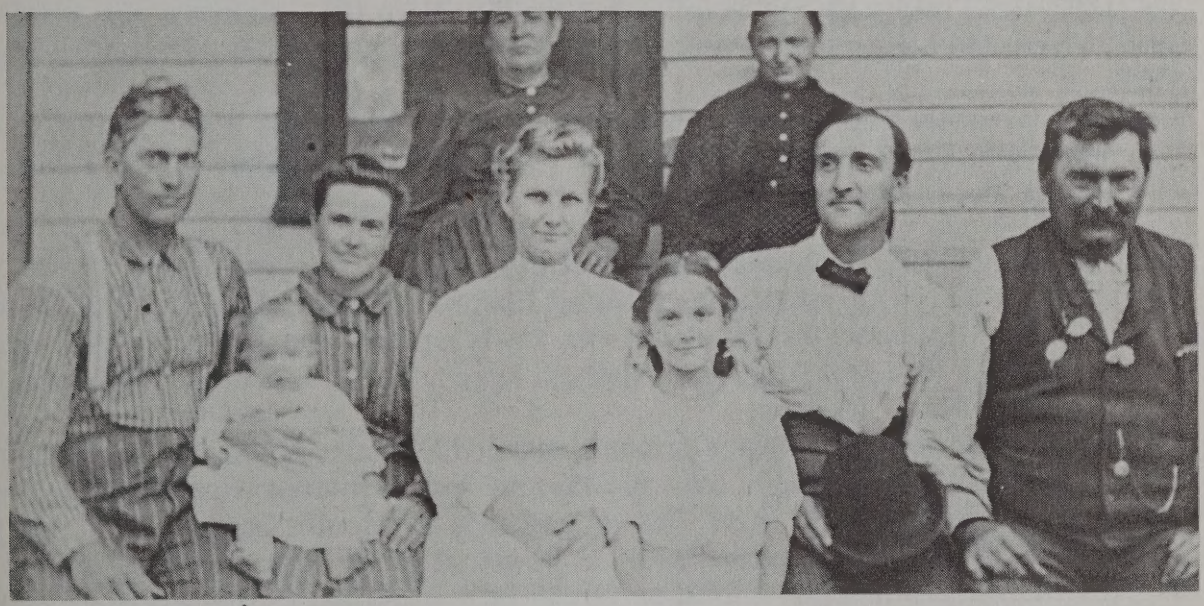
S.K. Randall and Leo Blust (Uncle to Laurence Blust).



S.K. Randall (son of Edwin Randall)

Bertha Baker
Avilla School Teacher for many years.

Left: B.P.W. Installed street signs in Avilla. Front Row: Hazel Garman, Janet Brazzel, Dorothy Lawshe, Olive Gieseking, Deloria Brock, Mildred Helvey, Betty Newman, Back Row: Luella Newnam, Laura Marshall.



Right: Samuel Weimer's family (on Kenny Amstutz farm): Alma Ott is the baby.

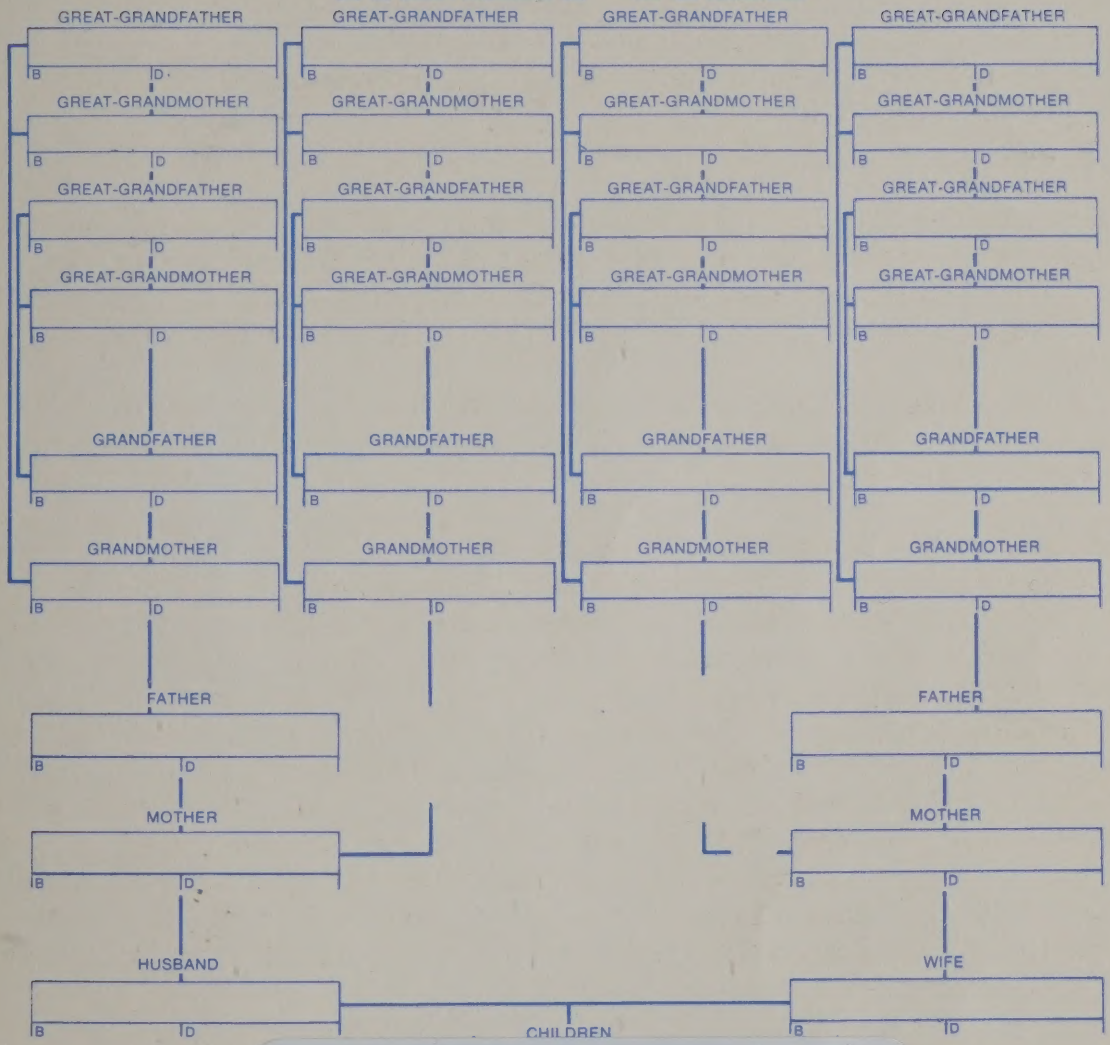
Man on let is: R.H. Vezde, Dentist. Man on right: George Pilgrim (War I Veteran 1918)

Joseph Helmer (1832-1872) Maria Kreinbrink (1832-1872):

Joseph Helmer: their son was married to Frances Borck, John died in 1948 at age 84 and Frances died 1949 at age 86. The couple was married Oct. 14, 1884, at St. Mary's church in Avilla. They both were born and lived in Avilla community. Mr. Helmer operated a farm near Avilla, then began working on the RR. on the section for the G.R.&I., Vandalia, & B.&O. In the early 1900's, he helped lay the interurban tracks connecting Kendallville, Auburn and Ft. Wayne As foreman of a section gang, he stayed with the lines until they were discontinued. To this marriage of John and Frances, they had six children: Charles, Avilla; William, Coldwater, Mi; Lawrence, Kendallville; Ethel Treesh, Auburn; Gertrude, Avilla; Myrtle Davis, Auburn.
Charles Helmer: eldest son of John and Frances (1885-1972) lived his entire life in Avilla. His first wife Rosa Fortman, died at child birth. He then married Mary Demske (1893-1952) Nine children as follows: Geraldine born 1912, LaRoma, 1915, Dale 1917, Virgil, 1919, Rita 1921, Phillip, 1924, Joan 1927, E. Patricia 1931, and James 1933.
Gertrude (Helmer) Teders: a daughter who also lived her entire life in Avilla, She was married to Linus Teders and their five children: Herbert, Irene, Vera, Martha, and Duane. By: Dale Helmer.

RENKENBERGER: Merle and Ethle (McCoy)
Children: Ronald M. Renkenberger married Elaine K. Stoops, daughter of Edward V. and Louise (Sweares) Stoops of LaOtto, In. Is a professional land surveyor and farmer in Swan Twp., Children are: Rodney, Karen, Todd, and Brad. Norma Jean sister, married Keith Thomas.
LEMPER: John Henry b. 1804, Germany, married Christine Cramer in 1837 in Ky. Moved to Allen Twp. in 1857. John & Christine had 9 children (b. in Putnam Co. Ohio prior to 1859) Marie, Nun; Charles pastor at Plymouth; Frederick, m. Mary Smith, Attica; William, Texas; Frank & Lewis, Avilla,; Anna, died as a child; Ferhard m. Mary Ann Teders, lived on family farm in Avilla; Gerhard & Mary Ann had 8 children: Henry, Auburn; John, Pa; Carl, Elkhart; Edward, Avilla; Mary, m. Herman Lash, Avilla; Bernard, Avilla, Joseph died as a child; Frances, m. Howard Traxler B&O engineer, remained on family farm in Avilla; Howard & Frances had 9 children: Vincent, Goshen; Omer, Rome City; Richard, Avilla, Eulalia, Waterloo; Thelma, Hamilton; Lois, LaOtto; Jack, Avilla; Harold, LaOtto; Lorraine, Avilla, Howard Traxler d. 1962, Edward, brother of Frances d. 1975. Frances Traxler is the sole survivor of the Gerhard Lemper family.
KEMERLY: (Herman) b. Swan Twp. moved to Avilla in 1919.
Vern (son of Herman (Maude (Brown) Kemerly) married Mary Simon (daughter of Walter & Nina (Jackson/Simon). Children: Terry m. April (Bell); Karyl m. Doug Swain, John m. Sherry (Osbun, & Jim.
CHUPP: (Levi and Fannie (Kauffman) of Shipshewanna, In.
Daniel (son of Levi) m. Larietta Kay Bentz (late Dale Bentz and Katheryn Kellum Bentz Mackey of Tupelo, Miss) and have 2 children: Darien Tamra, David Nathan. Moved to Avilla from Ft. Wayne, Mr. & Mrs. Keller (Ralph m. Anna Lauer (daughter of Frank Lauer (granddaughter of Mr. & mrs. John Diehm)). children: June Newman and marcile Hess of Kendallville, Betty Egolf of Avilla. Have 11 grandchildren and 13 gr. grandchildren.
LAYMAN: Ernest and Lolah Forker Layman had three children Earl, Mary, and Ellen (Layman) Lash. Moved from Kendallville to Fairbanks Corner in 1910.

FAMILY TREE



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